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ABSTRACT

This manual discusses recent research in the field of semantics. It was prepared as part of a series of books to be used in connection with a course of advanced study for experienced philologists and teachers. The Introduction and Part One are based mainly on the 1971-1972 course of lectures on Meaning Equivalence by Akhmanova, and discuss the notion that sentences are to be interpreted semantically through "deep structures" which are realized by their superficial "semantic equivalents." Part One is entitled "Meaning Equivalence on Utterance Level" and is divided into three chapters: "Meaning as a Linguistic Category"; "Purport, Interpretability, Meaning, and Definitions"; and "The Word as a Dialectical Unity of Content and Expression." Part Two, "Meaning Equivalence on the Level of Words," contains the findings of Marcenko's research in the field of synonymy, and is divided into the following chapters: "The Meaning Equivalence of Words as a Fact of Language"; "The Functional Approach to Meaning Equivalence"; and "Meaning Equivalence and Lexicography." (Author/AM)

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MEANING EQUIVALENCE AND LINGUISTIC EXPRESSION

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH, EDUCATION & WELFARE
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F O R E W O R D

The aim of the present manual - one in a series of books specially prepared for Mature Students, i.e. educated philologists and experienced teachers, who joined the English Department of the Philological Faculty of the Moscow State University for a brief period of advanced study - is to give an idea of recent research in the field in question, always accompanying theoretical disquisitions with linguistic material to be used at the respective seminars. In this way the ontological approach (Theory) and the heuristic one (Method) are most conveniently taken care of and presented as the dialectical u n i t y they are.

The Introduction and Part I are based mainly on the 1971-1972 course of lectures on Meaning Equivalence by Olga Akhmanova. Part II contains the findings of A.N.Marčenko's research in the field of synonymy. Nevertheless, the final text is to be regarded as the result of joint authorship with all inconsistencies and possible contradictions carefully ironed out.

Copious notes are appended to all the three parts because not all the authorities and materials cited are equally well-known in the remoter parts of this country.

I N T R O D U C T I O N

Meaning equivalence is often viewed as a philosophical and logical problem[1]. As a l i n g u i s t i c category it has not so far received all the attention it deserves - mainly because linguistic research in this field is often confounded with abstract-speculative disquisitions. We have repeatedly drawn attention elsewhere[2] to the harm done to linguistics by so many people proclaiming the mathematical-logical, the semiotic, and the Sprachphilosophische approaches to be the only scientific ones, the only ones really important for what is now described as "linguistic science". Linguistics, as the study of natural human languages, is then branded as something "unscientific" and even useless.

It is therefore essential to begin by trying to understand how it all came to pass. A glance at the history of our science may help us to answer this question and get a clearer view of the state of the art.

If we look back some 150 years when linguistics first reached the status of a science, we shall find that at that time linguists all over the world were united by their appreciation of c o m p a r a t i v e p h i l o l o g y - a science of the greatest significance to all the other humanities. The methods of comparative philology[3] were constantly elaborated and perfected in different countries and

1[x]-1961

by different schools. Although these had often contributed to the development of comparative philology in their own way, the unity was unbroken because everybody understood that linguistics (i.e. comparative philology) is a science in its own right, with its own subject, its own basic categories and sound scientific methodology.

Towards the close of the 19-th century, however, a flaw was found in the structure of comparative philology, for the latter, being based exclusively on written documents - and 99 per cent of written documents being either literary, or historical, or divine books - was inevitably confined to just one or two genres or modes of speech. That is why comparative philology could give a wrong idea of what a natural human language is. Corpuses of the berest'anyje gramoty kind, or diaries like Pepys', form a very small fraction of the total material. At the same time, as everybody knows, natural human languages are mainly used for daily communication; the loftier uses in literature, law-making, etc. being the exception rather than the rule.

Thus the way was gradually prepared for the next step - viewing natural human languages as "semiotic systems", as functional entities (one thinks of people like Ferdinand de Saussure, von der Gabelentz, Baudouin de Courtenay). Although they were outstanding comparative philologists themselves, they were becoming increasingly concerned with languages as synchronic systems, as effective means of communication. But there are other means of communication which exist side by side

with language. Hence the idea of "general semiology" or "general semiotics", of which natural human language is a part.

Semiotic systems are f u n c t i o n a l entities. If we regard language as part of general semiotics, as just one of the different semiotic systems to be studied as a means of s y n c h r o n i c communication, we need not, so it seemed, concern ourselves with their histories. We must abstract ourselves as much as we can from diachrony and concentrate on the synchronic systemic relations, to look at language in a c t i o n , to understand how the different elements work together in daily communication. If we had stopped at that and concentrated on a detailed and minute study of linguistic f a c t s in the light of these very reasonable ideas all would be well. But unfortunately we did not stop at that.

Things began to go wrong when natural human language was proclaimed to be m e r e l y one of the semiotic systems, just one among so many others. But a semiotic system, as can be seen from the name, is a system of s i g n s . Thus, for instance, the Morse code is a semiotic system par excellence, for in it every unit of content and every unit of expression are in regular one-to-one correspondence and jointly realize the, so-called "sign-function". The same applies, of course, to all the other semiotic systems such as, for instance, notation in music, or chemical formulae, or mathematical signs. In the case of natural human languages a certain analogy with regular

semiotic systems is, perhaps, observable on the "discritical" level, where semiological relevance is regularly expressed by means of various peculiar relationships between phonic form and the specific "content of otherness"[4]. If this were not so, alphabets could not be contrived, writing systems would not be effective, it would be very difficult to teach and learn languages, and so on.

But the moment we take a broader look, think of the system as a whole with its words and syntactic constructions, its idioms, and other refinements we understand that there can be no question of anything like a regular one-to-one correspondence between expression and content. Natural human languages are not well-defined orderly systems. They are open systems, permanently in a state of flux. They are social phenomena of a special kind. We cannot understand their "anatomy", to say nothing of their "physiology", or functional peculiarities, unless we have an o b j e c t i v e b a c k g r o u n d k n o w l e d g e o f t h e m (see below, pp. 29-30).

Things, then, began to go wrong when those features of natural human languages, which did not fit into a m e r e semiotic system were jettisoned as an encumbrance. They went from bad to worse when some of the general-semiotics principles, as applied to the feature, or discritical level, were forcibly extended to cover the whole of language. It is impossible to construct consistent sets of "oppositions", following the phonological model, to be used in lexicology, syntax, and even stylistics, unless one emancipated oneself, at least partly,

from the study of empirical linguistic facts, unless one b e g a n with generalizations and forced them onto the facts and "structured" or pigeon-holed the latter in accordance with certain preconceived notions.

It follows from what has just been said, that on the higher levels linguistic facts do not lend themselves to neat arrangements into simple oppositions. The "law of the sign" is persistently broken by natural human languages. The one-to-one correspondence between a certain content and a certain expression is hardly ever realized. It is, therefore, impossible to squeeze the facts of natural human languages into neat semiotic schemes or matrices. Attempts to do it are a dangerous waste of time, dangerous because so many young people have been led to think that this is the ultimate aim of "modern linguistics". As a result they ceased to concern themselves with empirical linguistic studies. What followed naturally was a narrowing down of philological research and a dwindling mastery of languages in general[5].

It should be noted in this connection, that neglecting linguistic facts and substituting for them artificially "generated" language-like (or is it "speech-like"?) sequences[6] is not the only shortcoming of Modern Linguistics. One cannot be a really educated linguist if one knows nothing about comparative philology and has never done it in one's life. But that is the way our young people are often trained. They do not have proper courses in comparative philology, they hardly ever study dialects - especially the social ones. Even phonology is

no longer a serious general course; very often it is studied only by "phonologists", which is again absurd, for phonology is absolutely essential and should be part of everybody's sound philological training. As a consequence, phraseology, style, some branches of lexicology remain, as it were, on the outskirts, on the periphery of linguistics. "Oppositions" between, for instance, different tropes or syntactic constructions are discussed without any reference to their actual linguistic expression.

But however gloomy the picture, this, by and large, is what we have come to. And in a sense, the ideas of generative grammar were a culmination of the trend - a complete abandonment of all the achievements of 20-th century linguistics, a wilful reversal of the process. To revert to Port-Royal and the grammaire raisonnée was a step backwards. Comparative philology, modern methods in the study of speech sounds, the discovery and description of so many languages, etc. are the real achievements of modern linguistics - they constitute it. To say therefore, that the Cartesian approach is t h e Approach, the only correct, proper, modern, and scientific approach to linguistics, to the study of natural human languages - is downright absurd, completely untenable and harmful for reasons expounded above. It distracts the attention of young scientists from their subject; they forget that linguistics is not a branch of mathematics and cannot be based on Cartesian, or any other form of rationalistic mathematical philosophy. It is therefore idle to claim - as has been not infrequently done in the course of the last 25 years -

that all linguists must be mathematicians, logicians, philosophers, etc.? Philosophy, logic, mathematics, psychology, neurology, etc. are separate scientific disciplines of which the linguist normally has only a general idea. Besides, let us not forget that not only in the late 19-th century, but for quite a while after that all the different sciences have been developing to such a degree of specialization that were, for example, even M.V.Lomonosov born in the modern period, even he with his unsurpassed genius could not have been a chemist, a physicist, a poet, and a grammarian at the same time.

After this general introduction - or unduly prolonged digression - we may turn to the main subject of the present manual: the problem of "meaning equivalence and linguistic expression".

In modern linguistics in general and in English studies in particular very much attention has been rightfully given to the problem which may in a general way be formulated as "same or different". In descriptive linguistics the ability to distinguish between the two was usually confined to the lower levels, i.e. phonology, morphorology and, in part, morphology. The idea was that if you need to describe an American-Indian language for the first time, you cannot do it unless you learn from the very beginning to tell the difference between the semiologically relevant elements and the semiologically irrelevant ones. Thus, for instance, how do we know whether the phonemes [b] and [p] in bill and pill are the "same" or not? Or for example, in bar and beat: are [b] and [b']

the same sounds or different ones? This, roughly, was the idea of "same or different" in classical descriptive linguistics.

Answering this basic question is, in a sense, the mainstay of all linguistic analysis. When we say, for instance: he will go there to-morrow; if he go there to-morrow; if he goes there to-morrow - is it the same go in all the three sentences, or are they different? The answer is: of course they are different! "If he goes ..." expresses real supposition; "if he go ..." is unreal condition, because the underlying assumption is that he is not able to go. At the same time go as a lexeme is obviously the same lexical unit or word.

By and large, then, the idea of "same or different" is basic to linguistics, all-important for linguistic analysis. But what is understood by "meaning equivalence" to-day is certainly quite different from the classical "same" as opposed to "different". In modern linguistics large numbers of scholars are convinced that the problem should in general be confined to the "native speaker's" ability to tell quite definitely whether, for example: "Oculists eye blondes" vs. "Blondes are eyed by oculists"; "The lion beat the unicorn" vs. "The unicorn was beaten by the lion" - are same or different. Later on[8] we shall go a little more deeply into that kind of material. Because so much has been written on the subject it is time either to stem, somehow, the current, or to join it, if it is any good.

But at the moment we must dwell on something that is much simpler and more widely known and, in accordance with generally recognized methodological principles, gradually pass on to something that is much more difficult and less widely known.

* *
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We shall begin then with something that is usually described as "synonyms" and "synonymy". This will be the first step in our discussion of the great problem of meaning equivalence and its linguistic expression. Although every child at school knows what "synonyms" are, having often heard the word "synonym", from a scientific point of view the question remains open. What are "synonyms"? What do we mean by "synonyms" as a l i n g u i s t i c category?

The question being a difficult one, we might as well begin by discussing certain philological facts which are pertinent to it. It is not uncommon nowadays to turn in situations of this kind to "Alice in Wonderland". The book is extremely interesting because it is now commonly regardod as the precursor of general semantics introduced in a charmingly playful way. This is also the reason why it had become very fashionable for almost decades to begin a learned treatise with a quotation from "Alice in Wonderland". Thus, for example, Roman Jakobson[9] begins one of the chapters of his remarkable book by quoting a part of a conversation between

Alice and the Cheshire Cat[10]. The Cat's question is excellent to begin a treatise on phonetics with - a most convincing way of proving the reality of the phoneme: what a phoneme is, whether it exists or not, and what are the methods of phonological investigation. Alice has no doubts about it. The sounds [p] and [f] are different phonemes in English because their opposition is semiologically relevant. [pɪg] is a pig and [fɪg] is a fig and if you have not heard what the other party said, you ask him to say it again and pronounce the basic variants of the phonemes properly.

If you open the book on, let us say, semantics, it is much more likely than not that you will find that classical example from Alice's conversation with Humpty Dumpty[11]. The Alice-Humpty Dumpty dialogue gives a very clear idea of what Edward Sapir had in mind when he said that a word is something which takes either a little more or a little less from the complete stock of semantic material pertaining to a language[12]. One word takes a little less, another one - a little more, while yet another may comprise so very much more.

When we try to speak English - with our Russian way of thinking and of distributing semantic material among different words - we very often cannot find the right English word for what we want to express because the overall "semantic material" is arranged, or divided between various English words in a way which is quite different from the one we are accustomed to. Let us take as an example the following trivial situation. Supposing that a Russian person is talking to an English friend and a

situation arises in which in Russian he would say: "nu čto ž, sozvonims'a na sleduŭuščej nedele". What is the English equivalent of this phrase? Let us do what ...? "Next week let us go on dialling each other's numbers until we actually succeed in getting the other party to listen to what we are saying and on the basis of this contact we shall ...". You cannot possibly say it in English, though in Russian it is so simple: "Davaj sozvonims'a!"[13]

Another example. A speaker of good old idiomatic Russian, when at somebody's house for a meal and the hostess solicitously asking what he did for his meals (now that he lives alone), says he gets along with sandwiches mostly, but from time to time "ot'jedajus' u Smitov" (the Smiths being the then host and hostess - people who generally do their guests very well). Under the circumstances the speaker would think this a very nice, funny, and at the same time polite and complimentary thing to say. But what would its English equivalent be? - "I make up for it at the Smiths" (?). More or less, but it would not render one tenth of what the speaker really wanted to convey - the metasemiotic connotation, the idea of being funny by using a bit of Russian popular idiom, and so on and so forth. The speaker would be delighted with his performance if he were allowed to say it properly in Russian. But if he had to say it in English he would sit and think unsuccessfully of something that would do just as well. Of course he could get away with a clumsy circumlocution again, something along the lines we discussed above in connection with "davajte sozvonims'a".

It is this very difficult problem which has been foreseen and so brilliantly and wittily presented in "Alice in Wonderland", together with practically all the rest of general semantics - including homonyms, phraseological units, deformation of idioms, etc.[14]. B u t n o t a w o r d a b o u t s y n o n y m s ! Just nothing! Alice, Humpty Dumpty, the Hatter, the Unicorn, the King, the Red Queen, all the lot of them never once concerned themselves with "meaning equivalence"! It may therefore be quite reasonably assumed that "synonyms" are not part of general semantics. What, then, is the position of synonyms? One stops and wonders and cannot understand how it happens that people keep talking about synonyms but, somehow, the linguistic status of synonyms, the role synonyms actually play in language remains obscure.

As far as semantics is concerned we all have our predilections. Our first book was "Alice in Wonderland"; next comes A.I.Smirnitsky's "Leksikologija anglijskogo jazyka"[15] which, we think, is among the best ever written on the subject. There is only about half a page in it devoted to synonyms. That is what it says (translation ours, O.A. and A.M.): "... In conclusion it should be observed that such phenomena or facts concerned with the word-stock of a language as synonyms, antonyms, metaphorical usage, archaisms, etc. should not be included as separate topics into the course of lexicology. These phenomena should be mentioned when describing or analysing the lexical system of a language only incidentally, by the way as it were, only insofar

as it is of importance for the basic subject under investigation. Knowing something about these things does help to understand some connotations within the complex system of words, but their investigation, or even their more or less detailed discussion, should be relegated to the course of general linguistics, or general semiotics, or general semantics, or possibly even to a course of theory of literature" (or what Smirnitsky calls teorija slovesnosti, using the older metalinguistic expression for which no generally accepted modern equivalent appears to exist).

"Of course," - says Smirnitsky, "when necessary, footnotes can be supplied in order that certain more or less typical facts may be brought to the students' notice. These, however, should appear only in the form of footnotes or a kind of introductory or supplementary remarks, but never, not by any means, as a full-fledged section of lexicology". He concludes this by saying: "What should or could these connotations or these footnotes possibly consist in and of? If you have a typical semantic group then you could mention, for example, that the choice of the right word is also connected with stylistic differentiation, or you could also mentfon that certain words are not literary or neutral and should be banned from proper usage. You could make these remarks by the way, but the synonymy of a given language (sinonimika dannogo jazyka) as such cannot be regarded as

a separate section of the course, for the sum total of synonyms (sovokupnost' sinonimov) does not form an actual, real group in its own right. It is not a particular lexical subsystem within the general lexical system of a given language". This is all there is to it as far as A.I.Smirnitsky is concerned.

So much, then, for the problem of synonyms as lexical units. But what does the layman think about it, especially if he is a layman with a fine sense of the language, possessing great linguistic and literary flair? For information of this kind let us turn to P.G.Wodehouse's latest book "Much Obliged, Jeeves"[16]. In fact, it is actually the first time we found a "series of synonyms" (sinonimičeskij r'ad) specifically mentioned in a book of fiction.

The connection between Bertie Wooster (the main character of the book) and Alice in Wonderland is obvious, because although the setting is quite different, they are both almost painfully concerned with language. Alice, as a child, was learning to speak - and being an observant child, she was always trying to understand the intricacies connected with the use of language in general, and English in particular. Bertie Wooster, although no longer a child, is always very eager to find the right word (le mot juste), and Jeeves is always eager to help him.

The situation in which synonyms are found to figure is as follows: Bertie Wooster has had an accident and is now sitting in the Junior Ganymede (a cosy club for elderly butlers and

gentlemen's gentlemen of fairly ripe years, in which Jeeves liked to spend so much of his leisure) and talking with Jeeves, when another member of the club, a smallish, plumpish, Gawd-help-us-ish member joins them and this is what Bertie Wooster's reaction is: "... As to his manner, I couldn't get a better word for it at the moment than "familiar", but I looked it up later in Jeeves's Dictionary of Synonyms and found that it had been unduly intimate, too free, forward, lacking in proper reserve, deficient in due respect, impudent, bold, and intrusive. Well, when I tell you that the first thing he did was to prod Jeeves in the lower ribs with an uncouth forefinger, you will get the idea.

"Hullo, Reggie," he said ...

"Good afternoon," said Jeeves, and I could see that the chap was not one of his inner circle of friends. His voice was cold, and anyone less lacking in proper reserve and deficient in due respect would have spotted this and recoiled."

Wodehouse makes fun of the Dictionary of Synonyms - and with very good reason - because, of course, it is something one cannot help making fun of when one finds all these long lines, long concatenations or chains of words which are listed together as "synonyms". If one were asked: are "unduly intimate", "too free", "forward", "lacking in proper reserve", "deficient in due respect", "impudent", "bold" and "intrusive" synonyms or not - where does one find the answer? Supposing one were to insist that "intrusive" and "bold" are n o t synonyms.

How does one know? What makes one think so?

Instead of "familiar" Bertie Wooster uses his newly-acquired knowledge in the field of synonyms, and the effect is grotesque. "Familiar" is such a simple everyday word. One can use it as much as one likes without carrying particular responsibility for doing so. But when using one of the much more precise expressions - especially the longer ones - one invariably pin-points something in a way which does not go with a trivial situation of the above kind.

But where does one stop and where does one learn what to say and what not to say? Of course, dictionaries of synonyms contain abundant recommendations about using as many synonyms as one can and not falling into the bad habit of saying, for example, "... and then we came to that nice house, and they offered us a very nice lunch, and the hostess wore a very nice dress and her manner was very nice, and everything was very nice, and everybody was very nice". But how do you implement this kind of advice? Where do you draw your synonyms from and how do you know the a r e synonyms?

Of course, we know very well that, for example, "she died" is the proper simple way of saying it; that "she passed away" is "high-flown", while "she kicked the bucket" should be carefully avoided. At the same time, if what you need is an expression to be used in a formal announcement of an illustrious personality's death, "he died" would sound too sentimental and not sufficiently matter-of-fact, the proper expression in this case being "the death has occurred of such and such a person".

But as has been shown by one of the authors[17] examples of this kind in dictionaries of synonyms or in books on stylistics are very scanty: the same set of just a dozen or so examples, the situations in which they could be used not occurring very often in our daily experience.

This is how things are with synonyms. Twenty years have passed since A.I.Smirnitsky spoke of synonyms (he did not actually w r i t e what was quoted above because the book was published posthumously from the notes of his lectures). In the course of those twenty years very much has happened in linguistics. The problem of meaning equivalence is now problem number one and by no means confined to synonymy in the old sense of the word. Nevertheless we might as well begin with the more generally known or at least superficially recognized aspects of the problem - the problem of synonyms and synonymy.

How do we approach it? Now, although A.I.Smirnitsky was not at all happy about synonyms (and with very good reason) he gives in his book very much place and attention to the problem of the so-called "thematic group" (problema tematičeskoj gruppy) in connection with the more general problem of "thematic classification"[18]. This again is something which goes back at least to the early nineteen-thirties and is usually connected with the name of J.Trier[19], who was the first to introduce the concept of the "semantic field". We sounded rather pessimistic when we discussed synonyms. We are, therefore, pleased to be able to turn to thematic groups in the hope of finding in them a more fruitful approach to meaning equivalence on the lexical level.

It is commonly held that there are two basic approaches to the study of semantic fields and thematic groups: one is logical, while the other is functional. Thus, for example, if you want to learn something about a verb, especially a polysemantic verb like to go and compare it with the other members of the thematic group, the functional approach obviously comes first. Evidently, we cannot learn very much about a verb of this kind unless we know plenty of combinations like, for example: time goes, the story goes, go hungry, things go well, roads go to London, the election goes against them, this clock will not go, etc. In other words, unless we know enough about the way "to go" is used as against, for example, "to proceed", "to stroll", "to pace", we cannot really understand it.

At the same time when dealing with a thematic group like, for example, "tree", "leaf", "branch", "bough", "twig", or "birch", "pine", "cypress", "linden", "oak", "yew", "ash" what we would most naturally begin with is not the functional, but the l o g i c a l approach. We would be fully justified in thinking first of the genus proximum et differentia specifica: we would first think of "tree" because we would understand that this is the genus proximum, while "birch", "oak", "pine", etc. are differentia specifica. This is the best and most general method of logical classification.

It must be pointed out that when we distinguish between the two approaches (and decide which is the logical and which is the functional one) we do not mean to decide in favour of one to the exclusion of the other. What we mean is that in some

cases we have to attach more importance to the functional, while in other cases - to the logical classification. Thus, for example, if we want to learn, understand, or memorize a thematic group like "birch", "cypress", "linden", "oak", "leaf", "branch", "twig", etc., it would not be so terribly important to think of these words in contexts like, for instance: a birch can grow, a pine can grow; or I can see a birch, I can see a pine; or the birch can be cut down, the pine can be cut down. For thematic groups of this kind it is the logical connection between the different words which comes first. That is why we would much prefer to arrange them into a thematic group on a logical basis primarily and study the contexts in which they appear most naturally as a second step, as something that is collateral to the main or basic approach.

A.I.Smirnitsky in his book on English lexicology gives very interesting examples and brings out the basic idea very clearly. We might add that there is, probably, nothing much we can say about the two approaches to the thematic groupings as compared with what has already been said years ago, perhaps even by the Ancients.

Now, are these two approaches distinguished or kept apart or realized at all in the innumerable papers and dissertations on the subject of synonyms? How do they set about it? What are the methods and approaches most frequently used in the study of synonyms?

Let us look first of all at a publication on the subject prepared by the English Department of the Moscow State

University, the book called "Osnovy komponentnogo analiza"[20]. We used to hear a lot about componential analysis. In the halcyon days of this doctrine people were quite enthusiastic about it and were sure that after a little effort they would succeed, at long last, in cutting up the recalcitrant, obdurate, obstinate words which behave in all kinds of unpredictable ways (as shown so wittily by Humpty Dumpty). For quite a while lexicologists believed that, at long last, they would be able to reduce all words to a limited number of elementary "semes" which it would be so simple to stick on separate blocks of wood, and then even a child would be able to produce whatever combinations of semes he or she might desire to possess. But as time went on, the method of componential analysis lost much of its attraction. We do not hear very much about it any longer from linguistic scientists. Even the English Department finds that nothing much has happened since 1969 as far as the predel'nyje semy or okončatel'nyje jedinicy (ultimate units) are concerned, in spite of the extensive literature on the subject[21].

One more point should be mentioned in connection with the problem in question. People hope to achieve significant results, as far as dictionary definitions are concerned, by beginning with componential analysis of the units which they pick out for explanatory purposes. But what are the components so far suggested? They are: agent, counteragent, object, result, instrument, source, subject, cause, beginning, continuation. One begins by taking, for example, the "agent" component (or

seme) and then looks at all his words and sees whether this component, this "agential" seme is there or not. After that he finds that on the basis of the agential seme he can bring together all kinds of doers of things - every imaginable kind of doers! - and then one is happy because here are, for example, two thousand words, and they are all brought together because they all possess the agential seme. Then one looks at the "object" seme and wonders whether it is discoverable in this or another set of words. Probably, here, too, he will find all kinds of words again such as, for example, "book", "soup", "desk", etc. They are, probably, all objects: the "object" seme is there because they can all be used as objects of an action. But being only linguists, and therefore saddled with hundreds of practical problems (writing dictionaries, books, text-books, manuals, teaching people English, etc.) we really cannot see how we can use these interesting facts in our practical work. We could say of course, that this level of discussion may one day be useful for interlinguistics and, possibly, form the basis of machine translation or computer analysis of language. But, probably, it is too early for that. Before that very high level of sophistication is attained, much more must be learned of the simplest facts of natural human languages. If people try to work on this extremely sophisticated level, while natural human languages are not taken proper care of, they are doomed to failure.

Nevertheless the idea as such is quite attractive. The fact that the method of componential analysis has come to

nothing may be explained, perhaps, by too little time having passed (it may require many more years to really get on with it); but it may simply not be feasible insofar as lexicology in general and synonyms in particular are concerned. Natural human language is not a rational system and does not lend itself to rational methods of analysis. Besides, the vocabulary is the most irrational part of the language, something that changes all the time because it reflects the minutest changes in the social life of the community and the words it consists of unceasingly acquire new and different connotations. It should be added that not only the connotations, but the words themselves come and go: one that was not there yesterday, suddenly comes into being and may be as speedily relinquished[22].

All this shows how difficult it is to rationalize, to deal with the vocabulary of natural human language logically, neatly dividing the whole into semes and subjecting them to different kinds of mechanical treatment (especially if we agree that our aim is to learn to understand languages and to use them properly). We must, therefore, get to the bottom of the finer connotations, the difficult and interesting relationships within the lexical stock of the language. We cannot possibly confine ourselves to onomasiology even in the case of technical terms because even in terminology (it so happens that we are deeply concerned with it in the Department where a large number of people are doing research in this field) there are so many things which are completely beyond all rationalization.

In the subsequent development of componential analysis,

then, the earlier hopes were not realized. Nevertheless the stream of dissertations, papers, and discussions on the subject has not abated[23].

* *

The title of the present book is meaning equivalence and linguistic expression. We are, therefore, sorry to have to begin by stating that people do not appear to have quite made up their minds (or at least not explicitly so) as to whether meaning equivalence should, could, or must be confined to what Soviet linguists still insist on describing as w o r d s . There can be little doubt that in actual fact people go on thinking mainly in terms of w o r d s , but, of course, hardly ever explicitly so. In the greater part of modern research the specific features of the word are not stated, while the problem of the "separate word", strangely enough, still appears to many to remain unsolved[24]. Thus, for instance, one of the tenets of descriptive linguistics (which had such a tremendous impact on Soviet linguistics) was that words do not exist, that scientific linguistics cannot be based on words, for this is not a reliable or even scientifically acceptable linguistic category. Among other things it has again and again been claimed that dictionaries of morphemes should be substituted for dictionaries of words.

For many years after Leonard Bloomfield stopped taking an active part in linguistics no attempts were made to realize his dream: only comparatively recently, since the Advent of the

electronic computer and the possibility of covering very large corpuses of material within reasonable periods of time (very quickly as compared with attempts to do the work by hand) did the invaluable Dictionary of Russian morphemes[25] begin a new era in linguistics.

Dictionaries of morphemes are, of course, most important for linguists, for morphologists, for people who are concerned with derivation and composition as parts of lexical morphology. But the layman, the ordinary user or learner of language - let alone the teacher not only of foreign languages but also the schoolteacher - has no real use for it. This point can best be illustrated by a short list of morphemes taken from the Dictionary:

хак	хан	хе
хакерм	хандарм	хезл
хакет	ханр	хелатин
хаккард	хантил	хеле
хако	харгон	хелез
хакт	хардиньер	хелет
хал	хас	хен
хало	хасмин	хенев
халь	хбан	хён-премьер
хальк	хгут	хеньшень
халюзи	хд	хер

This is obviously what happens if you want to make a dictionary of morphemes. "Хён-премьер", for example, is certainly a "morpheme" because it bears no partial phonetic-semantic

resemblance to any other element in the language[26]. We cannot cut off "жён-" from "-премьер", we cannot say "жён-премь-" and cut off "-ер", we cannot segment it into "жён-пр-" and "-емьер". "Жён-премьер" is a morpheme because neither of its parts bears a partial phonetic-semantic resemblance to any other units of the Russian language. At the same time "жак, жакт, жан, жас, жд, же, жен, жер" are, of course, morphemes - a fact which has been proved by the electronic computer - a very important objective result obtained according to a certain programme prepared by first-rate linguists, working with an absolutely scientific methodology. But the "objectivity" of the machine has very little to do with true linguistic objectivity, that of o b j e c t i v e b a c k g r o u n d k n o w l e d g e .

Only a thorough background knowledge of a language is r e a l l y o b j e c t i v e , not the results of the application of exact methods in general and mathematical methods in particular. There is no reason whatsoever to believe that what is listed in the dictionaries or used by very good writers is "subjective" and therefore unreliable, unacceptable, that linguistic investigation must now begin, as it were, from scratch. The most surprising thing is that theories and ideas of this kind should be applied to well-developed and widely used literary languages like English. If it were a case of "ethnographic", underdeveloped languages, or moribund ones - then the method of, for example, descriptive linguistics could, perhaps, be used as a possible method of investigation. But even

in this case the normal way of learning an unknown language would consist in listening to actual conversations and studying people's linguistic reactions to different situations. By making a profound study of those reactions, by listening and observing linguistic facts a person can arrive at some knowledge, at a first acquaintance with the language in question.

But for real, "objective" knowledge he would have to go much further than that. The objective knowledge of a language like English is the objective b a c k g r o u n d k n o w l e d g e , the knowledge stored not only in the consciousness of the separate individual, but in that of the speech community as a whole, and which is preserved in the treasures of literature and the thesauri of lexicography.

Although Soviet linguists are convinced that the Word is the basic unit of language and that semantic research must be based (and cannot but be based) on words, that all attempts to give up words and confine oneself to morphemes are doomed to failure - this does not appear to be everybody's cup of tea. If we look at a preprint of the article on lexicology for one of Mouton's compendia (Mouton has planned to publish a number of all-embracing compendia which are supposed to bring the linguistic world up to date and provide readily accessible information on all the most important aspects of our subject) we shall be surprised to find that very little has changed in the understanding of the word-morpheme relationship in the course of the last thirty years (at least as far as American linguistics is concerned).

The problem "what is a word?" is still being discussed in the literature. We still hear of words having "no cross-cultural validity", of their having to be redefined for each language "separately". Although we are unable to trace the following pronouncement - "... No generally accepted and satisfactory definition exists and linguistics with good reason denies the validity of the word altogether relegating it to folk linguistics" - it appears to give a well-formulated succinct statement of this view.

By "folk linguistics" then is meant what we have tried to explain by quoting Humpty Dumpty and reminding our readers of Sapir's approach to the category (every word takes in either a little more or a little less from the overall amount of semantic material). If this is "folk linguistics" then we are "folk linguists" because we could not for a second think of relinquishing the word as the main category of what we thought was l i n g u i s t i c s .

As far as the structural or expression plane is concerned, one methodologically very important point can safely be made: although not all the units which in the orthographic texts are divided from one another by blank spaces are on a par, this does not interfere with the general conclusion that the word is the main linguistic unit on which all other units and categories are based. The concept of "residual separability" (ostatočnoj vydelimosti)[27] takes care of this. In other words, if we were to take a piece of text, for instance: "The aim of the present manual - one in a series of books specially prepared for Mature

Students ..." - it would immediately strike the eye that words like "aim", "present", "manual", "one", "series", "books", "specially", "prepared", "mature", "students" are quite different from words like "the", "of", "a", "for", "in". In Russian-Soviet linguistics these "syncategorematic" words are regarded as w o r d s because when the full words (the words about which there is no doubt as to their verbal quality) have been singled out, these little things remain. They cannot possibly be morphemes because, if they were morphemes, they would be "torn out" of the text together with the larger and weightier elements. This is a very important point because in this way the second part of this manual - meaning equivalence in t e r m s o f w o r d s - gets a firm theoretical grounding.

The Word is the basic unit of language and it is meaning equivalence in terms of words that we are mainly interested in. But we could not go on with what forms the subject of Part II, if we did not begin by taking a broader view of our subject. We must begin with "meaning equivalence in terms of semantic components", the modernist idea that whole sentences should be semantically interpreted through the prism of meaningful "deep structures", with the superficial "semantic equivalents" appearing only as their pale shadows. This is what, together with the more general categories of linguistic meaning, its varieties and types - will be the subject of Part I.

NOTES

1. The reader is referred to the extensive bibliography of Soviet publications attached to Jevgen'jeva (1966, pp.202-226; 1972, pp. 196-243), see esp. Apres'an, Bereŝan, Kamenskaja, Kesel'man, Vilumsen, Žolkovskij and Mel'čuk. A detailed list of works on meaning equivalence by foreign linguists is given in Filipec (1961, pp.341-354). For a logician's discussion of synonymy, see esp. Carnap (1956), Church (1956), Mates (1950), Naess (1953), Quine (1953, 1971), Ujemov (1961).

2. Of the manuals, published for Mature Students, see Akhmanova (1972a, 1972b), Akhmanova and Mikael'an (1972).

3. Cf. Geyl (1955, p. 32): "... The nineteenth century became the age of history. All study of the humanities, of language, literature, law, and religion was renewed by applying to it the historical method; by thinking about these subjects in terms of a process of growth and development".

4. See Akhmanova (1971a, pp. 9-12).

5. See, for example, the so-called Voroneŝ Project, which insisted on reducing the whole of the foreign-language course to a list of "patterns" - "generating" sentences and "transforming" them in accordance with the "rules". Reading English books was forbidden and fiction banned.

6. Modern Linguistic literature abounds in examples of what is aptly described as "linguistic folklore". Here are a few instances, borrowed from Chafe (1971, pp. 1-26): Richard

was forced to eat crow; Leo called for another pitcher; Oculists eye blondes - Blondes are eyed by oculists; Bill realized that the bank robber was John's uncle - Bill realized that the bank robber was the person who is the brother of John's mother or father, or the husband of the sister of John's mother or father; Ronald and Donald killed each other; John killed Harry - John caused Harry to die - John caused Harry to become dead - John caused Harry to cease being alive - John caused Harry to become not alive. The following quotation from Percival (1971, p.184) is very much to the point: "...A brief word seems called for about the sentences Salus uses as examples. They range from the absurd ("Irving sailed to Sweden in a coracle") and the morbid ("The lame stork flew in circles") to statements which make sense only to a relatively small in-group ("Hobbits love ripe mushrooms", "Churchy assaulted Pogo"). I am aware that grammarians have often been accused of using colorless utterances as examples: one thinks of Sapir's "The farmer killed the duckling" and Bloomfield's "Poor John ran away". But linguists have now gone to the opposite extreme of cultivating the bizarre or the risqué for its own sake (emphasis ours, O.A. and A.M.)".

7. Incidentally this is reflected in lexicography, see, for example, Simeon (1968, p. XXIV) where no less than 30 different sciences are regarded as legitimate material for An Encyclopaedia of Linguistic Terms including, for instance,

anatomy, physiology, philosophy, aesthetics, etc.

8. See pp.50-53 below.

9. See Jakobson and Halle (1956, p. 58).

10. Here is the original passage (Gardner, 1966, p. 90):

"... Alice waited a little, half expecting to see it again, but it did not appear, and after a minute or two she walked on in the direction in which the March Hare was said to live. "I've seen hatters before," she said to herself: "the March Hare will be much the most interesting, and perhaps, as this is May, it won't be raving mad - at least not so mad as it was in March". As she said this, she looked up, and there was the Cat again, sitting on a branch of a tree.

"Did you say "pig", or "fig"?" said the Cat.

"I said "pig", replied Alice; "and I wish you wouldn't keep appearing and vanishing so suddenly: you make one quite giddy!"

11. Here is the original passage (op. cit., pp. 268-269):

"... And only one for birthday presents, you know. There's glory for you!"

"I don't know what you mean by "glory", Alice said.

Humpty Dumpty smiled contemptuously. "Of course you don't - till I tell you. I meant "there's a nice knock-down argument for you!"

"But "glory" doesn't mean "a nice knock-down argument," Alice objected.

"When I use a word", Humpty Dumpty said, in rather a scornful tone, "it means just what I choose it to mean - neither more nor less".

"The question is", said Alice, "whether you can make words mean so many different things".

"The question is", said Humpty Dumpty, "which is to be Master - that's all".

Alice was too much puzzled to say anything; so after a minute Humpty Dumpty began again. "They've a temper, some of them - particularly verbs: they're the proudest - adjectives you can do anything with, but not verbs - however, I can manage the whole lot of them! Impenetrability! That's what I say!"

"Would you tell me, please", said Alice, "what that means?"

"Now you talk like a reasonable child", said Humpty Dumpty, looking very much pleased. "I meant by "impenetrability" that we've had enough of that subject, and it would be just as well if you'd mention what you mean to do next, as I suppose you don't mean to stop here all the rest of your life".

"That's a great deal to make one word mean", Alice said in a thoughtful tone". Cf. Ullmann (1962, p. 48).

12. See p. 47 below.

13. The only English equivalent we can think of is "we shall be in touch" (?); but what about the Russian "bud'em

deržat' sv'az'" (??).

14. "Alice in Wonderland" is brimful of homonyms - to think only of the "tale"! Puns and play upon words all along, all based on a wide selection of homonyms and homonymous expressions. Here are a few instances: ... "You promised to tell me your history, you know", said Alice, "and why it is you hate - C and D", she added in a whisper, half afraid that it would be offended again.

"Mine is a long and a sad tale!" said the Mouse, turning to Alice, and sighing.

"It is a long tail, certainly", said Alice, looking down with wonder at the Mouse's tail; "but why do you call it sad?" ...

... "Why did you call him Tortoise, if he wasn't one?" Alice asked.

"We called him Tortoise because he taught us", said the Mock Turtle angrily; "really you are very dull!"...

The deformation of phraseological units is one of Carroll's favourite exercises in jocular style. Thus, the King felt faint and was feverishly eating hay: ... "There's nothing like eating hay when you're faint", he remarked to her, as he munched away.

"I should think throwing cold water over you would be better", Alice suggested: " - or some sal-volatile".

"I didn't say there was nothing better", the King replied. "I said there was nothing like it". Which Alice did not venture to deny. ..."

3[x]-1861

Another good example of deformation of a phraseological unit:

> ... "Of course you don't!" the Hatter said, tossing his head contemptuously. "I dare say you never even spoke to Time!"
>
> "Perhaps not", Alice cautiously replied: "but I know I have to beat time when I learn music".
>
> "Ah! that accounts for it", said the Hatter. "He won't stand beating. Now, if you only kept on good terms with him, he'd do almost anything you liked with the clock ...".

15. See Smirnitsky (1956, pp. 201-202). Cf. Berežan (1972, p. 12).

16. P.G.Wodehouse. Much Obliged, Jeeves. London, 1971, pp. 35-36.

17. See Marčenko (1972b, esp. pp.13-19).

18. Smirnitsky (op. cit., pp. 174-183).

19. The concept was originally introduced by Trier (1931). It would not be out of place to quote what Ullmann (1964, p.58) said in connection with the results of Trier's work: "... The chief architect of the field theory, Professor Trier, has given a brilliant demonstration of this technique. By comparing the structure of the sphere of knowledge in Middle High German around 1200, and the shape of the same field a hundred years later, in the mystical writings of Master Eckehart, he was able to identify some significant changes which point to an entirely different mentality, scale of values and social background".

"... Starting from rather different premises, the

French linguist G.Matoré has evolved a field concept closely akin to Trier's, but marked by a strong sociological bias. In his book, "La méthode en lexicologie" (1953), he has outlined a technique for studying the structure of the vocabulary as a reflection of the structure of society. His conceptual spheres are mapped out on the basis of sociological criteria, and organized around two types of important words: mots-témoins ("witness-words"), which occupy a prominent place in the hierarchy, and mots-clés ("key-words"), which epitomize the leading ideals of each generation" (Ullmann, op. cit., p. 14). For a very interesting and competent analysis of the approach, see Budagov (1971 a).

20. Mednikova (1969).

21. The reader is referred to the hand-picked bibliography given in Mednikova (op. cit., pp. 19-21, footnotes §§ 21, 22, 24; p. 30, footnote § 10).

22. Cf. Foster (1968), where a great number of examples are not only assembled, but also carefully explained in terms of usage and style.

23. Among the latest publications where the method of componential analysis is applied, see the following "avtorefe-raty kandidatskix dissertacij" (candidate theses): V.N.Filippov. Opyt komponentnogo analiza plana soderžanija leksiki, sootnosi-moj s pon'atijem "neobxodimost'", i predikatnoje vyraženije etogo pon'atija [An Experiment in the Componential Analysis of Words Denoting the Notion of "Necessity", and the Predicative

Expression of This Notion in Modern English] (Kalinin, 1971); L.G.Mixedova. Tematičeskij r'ad verba dicendi v sovremennom anglijskom jazyke [The Thematic Group of verba dicendi in Modern English] (Moscow, 1971); V.S.Vinogradova. Smyslovaja struktura slova i semantičeskaja gruppa v strukture semasiologičeskogo urovn'a [The Semantic Structure of a Word and the Semantic Group As a Unit of the Semasiological Level] (Leningrad, 1971); A.M.Kuznecov. Sopostavitel'no-tipologičeskij analiz terminov krovnogo rodstva v anglijskom, datskom, francuzskom i ispanskom jazykax [The Contrastive-Typologic Analysis of Kinship Terms in English, Danish, French, and Spanish] (Moscow, 1971); E.A.Porotikova. Sinonimija sintaksičeskix konstrukcij, upotrebl'ajemyx v funkcii postpositivnogo opredelenija v sovremennom anglijskom jazyke [The Synonymy of Syntactic Constructions Functioning As Postpositional Attributes in Modern English] (Leningrad, 1972); A.M.Avdukova. Glagol "Think" v predložnyx slovosočetanijax, vyražajuščix deliberativnyje otnošenija, i tematičeskije r'ady glagolov, ob'jedin'onnyx značenijem "think" [The Verb "think" in Prepositional Word-Combinations Expressing Deliberative Relations and the Thematic Groups of Verbs of Thinking] (Moscow, 1972).

24. When we said that the problem of the separate word as a theoretical problem still stands out we meant linguistics generally. In this country, in the tradition of Russian-Soviet linguistics, the Word (otdel'noje slovo) has always been regarded as the basic unit of language. L.V.Ščerba, V.V.Vino-

gradov, A.I.Smirnitsky, A.A.Reformatskij, R.A.Budagov have carried out many investigations to prove that this is actually the case. See esp. Vinogradov (1944, pp. 31-43; 1972, pp. 13-37), Smirnitsky (1952, pp. 182-200 ; 1956, pp. 12-47); Budagov (1965, pp. 9-29; 1971a; 1971b). The idea that words should be abandoned in favour of morphemes is totally rejected by Budagov (1971a, p. 21).

The word as a self-contained unit with the "rich and varied imagery centred on it", its independent status is not only carefully explained, but also illustrated with a profusion of interesting quotations in Ullmann (1962, pp. 36-39): "... There can be no doubt that awareness of words, as distinct from other linguistic units, lies at the very root of man's whole conception of language. On the written and the printed page, he is faced with words neatly set out as discrete elements, and in the dictionary he finds them in a "pure" state, free from contextual associations, each of them set up as an independent entity with its own meaning or meanings. The vocabulary thus gives the impression of a vast filing system in which all items of our experience are docketed and classified. We are so convinced of the validity of our words that we automatically assume the existence of things behind the labels, and implicitly believe in the reality of abstract ideas".

25. Worth, Kozak, Johnson (1970, pp. 191-192).

26. According to Bloomfield (1933, p. 161) "... A linguistic form which bears no partial phonetic-semantic resemblance to any other form, is a simple form or morpheme".

27. An exhaustive treatment of the problem can be found in Smirnitsky (1952, esp. pp. 193-194); see also Idzelis (1972, pp. 121-124). Ullmann (1962, pp. 44-48) rightly regards as absolutely proved both the independent status of the full word and the category of residual separability: "... It can be proved by purely formal criteria, without any recourse to meaning, that form-words have some features in common with full words ...".

PART I

MEANING EQUIVALENCE ON UTTERANCE LEVEL

Chapter I

Meaning as a Linguistic Category

One of the reasons why linguistic meaning is still made out to be something elusive and even mysterious is the lack of a simple and clear-cut definition of the term[1]. The usual practice consists in bringing together as many differently worded definitions of "meaning" from an endless variety of philosophical, psychological or Sprachphilosophische disquisitions as possible[2]. The power and fetishism of words remains as potent as ever. [mi:niŋ] is what everybody is trying to define and explain as a term (a terminus) in utter oblivion of the "meaning of meaning". The medieval nominalistic approach which pervades modern linguistic writing still remains the most dangerous set-back ever.

Instead of asking (as everybody should who has anything to do with terms) what is the real "thing", the actual object of extralinguistic and extraterminological reality to denote which the above very imperfect and often misleading term has been devised, it is usual to begin with the term as the epistemological "primary". This results in w o r d s being more or less skilfully woven into the fabric of the original term with a host of attendant analyses and criticisms

as superstructures of the third order: so-and-so's definition is mentalistic! it deals with directly non-observable phenomena! it is mechanistic and leads nowhere ... etc.

We have had innumerable occasions to explain that linguists (i.e. people whose subject is natural human language and whose scientific aim is to study and categorize it in such a way as to help the teacher and learner, the lexicographer and the translator, the orator and the writer) have too much l i n g u i s t i c work to do[3]. They cannot, at the same time, pose as philosophers, psychologists, or mathematicians however much in vogue such postures may be. They cannot be expected to rack their brains over abstruse and vague definitions, which all too often differ only on the level of verbal modification. All the linguist is concerned with is the following: when people talk, they find themselves in situations, are called upon to convey and receive messages, including "volitional" and adhortative ones. The "noises" they make in these familiar situations are basically (from the point of view of their semiological relevance) prosodic[4]. The "content" that attaches to them is most conveniently called "purport" - soderžanije-namerenije. It can be conceived and passed on only in interpretable contexts - linguistic (supra-phrasal unities) or context-of-situational. It follows naturally that the problem posed in the present manual - that of "meaning equivalence and linguistic expression" - should be studied step by step, beginning with utterances and contexts of situation and only gradually narrowing down to the immediate

object of inquiry - the separate word or monolexemic expression.

Meaning is a fact of language because of a constant and firmly established association between a given segment of conceptual material and a given piece of linguistic expression. It is always the result of generalization, abstraction from the concrete facts of actual extralinguistic experience. But there are abstractions and abstractions: a clear distinction must, therefore, be made between the meaning of separate words, which are endowed with the power of individual reference (and can therefore serve as labels for isolated concepts) and those linguistic meanings, which are discoverable only in terms of categories, based on systems of meaningful oppositions. The former are purely lexical - an open end with new items ever cropping up and obsolescent ones falling out to satisfy the ever changing needs of naming; the latter are comparatively stable, forming a basic and closed framework. The former are freely chosen by the speaker to say what he wants and leave unsaid what he does not; the latter are obligatory, imposed on the speaker by the systemic nature of the categorial ensemble, grammatical insofar as grammar is ars obligatoria. The different lexical units are more or less successfully organized into thematic series, lexical sets, semantic fields, etc. The grammatical categorizations have only recently been raised to the status of a science by the emergence of a systematic and unbiased approach to the underlying cognitive taxonomies[5].

To return to the d e f i n i t i o n of meaning by linguists which must be carefully distinguished from those attempted by philosophers, psychologists, logicians, anthropologists, and so on. It is unfortunate that the two are too often not kept clearly apart. Trying to bring together, or coordinate, all the numberless definitions of meaning which we find in the works of scholars representing different sciences can only result in something of a muddle; this will become appalling, if we remember that within linguistics itself we have, on the one hand, those people who are linguists in the proper sense of the word (people who concern themselves with analysis of actual linguistic facts as they are) and, on the other hand, "interlinguists", who regard human language as only one of the elements of general semiotics. Unfortunately, they do not confine their disquisitions to the logical languages of science, mediator languages, artificial languages for man-machine intercourse, etc., but much too frequently seek to rationalize at the expense of certain parts or portions of natural language and to dissect the reality which underlies linguistic expression into sections or ultimate parts and then combine them again on logical principles. But of course, because of its abstract character "interlinguistic" semasiology cannot take the place in l i n g u i s t i c semantics; it has no influence whatsoever on, for example, lexicographic work; neither has it helped anybody really to understand, or classify, or define the meanings of words as they actually exist and function in natural human languages.

Let us now dwell at some length on the different kinds of meaning and begin with the W o r d . It has been found hard to define lexical meaning mainly because the w o r d , the lexeme is something so common, so much part and parcel of everybody's linguistic experience that there can be no doubt whatsoever not only of its objective existence as a global and "... a definitely moulded entity that takes in as much or as little of the conceptual material of the whole thought as the genius of the language cares to allow"[6], but of its being individually meaningful as well. Otherwise stated, lexical meaning is a reverberation in the human consciousness of "objects" of reality (phenomens, relationships, qualities, and processes) which (the reverberations) becomes a fact of language because (only when) a constant and indissoluble connection is established between the reverberation and a certain sound (or sound-complex, or "caul"). Thus the particular reverberation becomes the content of the word, with respect to which its sound-form or expression functions as a "sound-envelope" or "caul" - indispensable not only because it is the physical expression of the content and the vehicle for communicating it to other people, but also because without it the given lexical meaning could not come into being, exist and develop[7].

Because of so much misunderstanding on the subject of meaning we want to reiterate that what we are talking about is not reverberation in the human consciousness pure and simple (because a reverberation in the consciousness in general is the concept) but a specific kind of reverberation.

It is the reverberation which serves as the content for an individual, specific piece of linguistic e x p r e s s i o n. Thus, for instance, the meanings of black or blue in English are different from the meanings of č'ornyj or sinij in Russian, because the form, the sound-complex, the orthographic complex black or blue in English has covered, on the expression plane, has cut out of it, as it were, taken, consumed - not the same segment of reverberation of objective reality that is covered or taken or consumed by the Russian words sinij or č'ornyj.

Chapter 2

Purport, Interpretability, Meaning, and Definition

The difference between lexical meaning (the meaning of emic units) and p u r p o r t (the "content" or "meaning" of utterances, i.e. etic units) can best be understood if we bear in mind that the latter needs to be i n t e r p r e - t a b l e (cf. above p. 44): when utterances are constructed they usually form part of larger chunks of discourse; only in this way can the requirement of interpretability be met[8]. Unless they are very clearly and closely connected with the context of situation or a supra-phrasal unity, separate sentences are extremely difficult to interpret. That is the reason why the completely isolated sentences we now find in what we think are linguistic books and articles are not acceptable from this standpoint. A sentence like, for example, "John has been lengthening the driveway" has no purport, it does not convey, or pass on, or get across any message. It would be or become interpretable only if we knew that this was an answer to a question asked about somebody the speaker knows, for example[9]:

=='What has !John been ,doing all this \time ==
==John has been !lengthening the \driveway ==

or if the speaker had previous knowledge of a driveway which needed lengthening: ==' Who has been !lengthening the \drive-way ==\John has == or something of that kind, always assuming background knowledge of a John and a driveway. Obviously, the

same combination or string of words, if accompanied by a different intonation or prosodic contour, would change its purport. If instead of saying ═══ John has been ˈlengthening the \driveway ═══ , we said ═══ John has been ˈlengthening the \w driveway ═══ we would express surprise. There could be other intonation contours for anger, dissatisfaction or whatever, the expression of which depends entirely on the use of different prosodic contours.

In this connection, if we were to return to the famous sentence "Colourless green ideas sleep furiously" we would say that all kinds of variations on the theme could easily be realized by prosodic means. If we said, for example, something like

═══ ˈFuriously • ˈsleep • ideas — ˈgreen \colourless ═══
lento

- which in the classical variants of generative grammar was branded as ungrammatical or unacceptable - the pauses between words and reduced tempo together with inverted word-order would make very good sense[10].

In classical transformational theory semantic equivalence for active and passive constructions on the level of utterances was taken for granted; thus "the man hit the boy" and "the boy was hit by the man"[11]. From the point of view of general logic there may be something in statements of this kind; linguistically, however, they are untenable: "... a passive construction cannot have exactly the same significance as its corresponding active construction: it is negative, whereas the other is positive. "The lion beat the unicorn" is not identical with

"The unicorn was beaten by the lion". It is conceivable that a writer would deliberately intend "The unicorn was beaten ..."; and not "The lion beat ..."; and to say to him "Use the active rather than the passive verb" is mere impertinence"[12]. It is also interesting to take an extract from a recent article[13] where the same obvious incongruity or incompatibility is very clearly demonstrated. Chafe is quite positive about "Oculists eye blondes" not being the same as "Blondes are eyed by oculists". This is what he says: "... It is only on some gross level that surface structures like the following can be thought to carry identical meaning ... If we can ignore the silliness of these sentences long enough to think about what they mean, given the normal intonation pattern, most of us ought to be able to realize that the first sentence tells us about something that oculists do, whereas the second tells us about something that happens to blondes. The distribution of new and old information in the two sentences is significantly different". In this way Chafe introduces to his American colleagues the concept of "functional sentence perspective" and explains in this rather schematic and very concise way the extreme importance of this category for syntactic analysis. We feel bound to remind our readers that utterances - which must be interpretable before they can be made intelligible - carry or convey or get across to the listener a certain p u r p o r t ; that very often this is volitional, hortative, adhortative, etc.; the variety and subtlety of different purports make meaning equivalence on sentence level an extremely complicated

problem. The interplay, the combination of the various categories which go to the making of the sentence, is so complex that one can hardly find two completely equivalent sentences on all the sub-levels of syntactic expression.

When we talk about sentences of the kind exemplified above and refer our readers to the well-known books and articles on the subject, we do not do it because this is something we are really setting out to analyse in detail or do independent research on. Syntactic analysis, if the basic approach to syntax is the dialectical unity of colligation and collocation, cannot be satisfied with bare "relational skeletons" (rel'acionnyj karkas), formulae, "models" and "patterns" as abstractions which do so much violence to the subject as it really is[14]. In this part of the book we therefore confine ourselves to the statement of the problem: what does one do with meaning equivalence in terms of utterances or on the level of Major Syntax?

We began with recent publications to present an up-to-date "state of the art". We shall now go back and say a few words about some earlier works which were inspired by the ideas of generative grammar. Thus, for instance, Quirk[15] does not stop at the more elementary equivalences as in concatenations like: it is known that he works very much - he is known to work very much - his working very much is a well-known fact - the fact, that he works very much, is well-known - but goes very much further. What he tries to establish is syntactic-semantic equivalence - or lack of it - for slots in certain well-

known and frequently used English constructions[16].

The original idea was of one kernel sentence and a number of transformation rules. By applying these to the kernel sentence we were thus supposed to arrive at what could be aptly described as meaning equivalence on utterance level.

But this idea was short-lived. Thus, Chafe gives a very clear picture of how the concept of kernel sentences was gradually abandoned[17]. Nevertheless, the idea of transformations - whatever the name given at a particular period in the development of the theory - still lingers (although hardly applicable to factual linguistic investigation and viable only in the realm of abstract-logical or deductive ideas). It was also Chafe who showed that the mechanical approach to meaning equivalence takes no account of "directionality" - a most important factor, because whenever there is a real, and not an imagined utterance, an utterance which is a fact of language, and not a fact of abstract logic, functional sentence perspective is of the essence. The utterance is deployed in time, it moves in a specified direction. One cannot simply turn it round and put what originally came at the end at the beginning, or change the order of syntagms at will. There is so much literature on the subject that all we have to do now is give an idea of how the problem of meaning equivalence in terms of utterances has been treated so far and what are the more up-to-date approaches to this extremely complex problem.

The main reason why we give so much attention to utterances is that, according to the plan of the Manual, we begin on the

level of Major Syntax and only gradually narrow down our investigation to separate words. But it is by no means the only one, for the problem of meaning equivalence on utterance level is closely connected with that of "definitions", i.e. sentences, which function in many cases as semantic equivalents of separate words. Although, at first sight, definition might appear to have little to do with this part of the book, it is one more aspect of the general meaning equivalence problem.

Like so many other linguistic problems, it is often treated and discussed in the literature from diametrically opposite points of view. Although the methodologically correct approach is that the word is p r i m a r y while the definition is s e c o n d a r y [18] (one must begin with the word and then think of a definition - explanatory or logical or whatever), when we turn to some modernist semasiological dissertations, we find that their writers regard the meaning of a word as a fiction of the brain, depriving it of any epistemological reality[19]. The meaning of a word, then, does not exist objectively; it is merely what the dictionary says it is. In this way the cart is put before the horse and definitions suddenly acquire a significance, an importance which is out of proportion as compared with the word. One is thus led to believe that words are only sound-cauls (or sound-envelopes) - empty inside and stuffed with some kind of content only when a definition has been formulated.

Within the framework of the present manual the formal aspect of meaning equivalence (word-to-word, utterance-to-

utterance, word-to-utterance, etc.) occupies a particularly prominent place because of its influence on the method of arranging the material. According to the original plan, Part I was to be devoted to the "utterance-to-utterance" cases, while Part II was to contain only the "word-to-word" ones. In this way the "mixed" types - the "utterance-to-word" or vice versa were left out of the picture.

After what has been said about definition, however, we feel bound to find a place for the formally heterogeneous equivalences too, the most likely place for them being the present chapter. We shall therefore proceed now with copious lists of "equations" of the "word-definition" kind - copious not only because of the abundance of available material, but also - and mainly - because they can be variously employed by our readers. We divide our material into four groups:

1. The pivotal word of the definition belongs to the same part of speech as the entry-word, but has a more general meaning.

   a) A substantive:

      "agenda" - items of business to be considered at meeting; "anecdote" - narrative of detached incident; "bargain" - agreement on terms of purchase; "brigand" - member of a robber gang; "cemetery" - burial-ground other than churchyard; "cicerone" - guide who explains things; "cohesion" - force with which parts cohere; "complaint" - statement that one is aggrieved or dissatisfied; "coxcomb" - person

given to showing off; "crackle" - sound of repeated slight cracking; "demand" - request made as of right; "fear" - emotion caused by impending evil; "felony" - crime graver than misdemeanour; "idea" - notion conceived by the mind; "jilt" - woman who capriciously discards lover; "joke" - thing said or done to excite laughter; "levity" - disposition to make light of weighty matters; "miracle" - event due to supernatural agency; "parable" - narrative used to typify some moral or spiritual truth; "parvenu" - person who has risen from obscurity; "penance" - punishment suffered as an expression of penitence; "pilgrim" - person who journeys to sacred place; "sage" - person credited with profound wisdom; "sloven" - person of careless untidy habits; "sot" - man constantly stupid with drink; "surveillance" - watch kept on suspected person; "taunt" - thing said to anger or wound a person; "tenet" - doctrine held by a party, sect; "treason" - violation by a subject of his allegiance to sovereign or State; "thud" - sound made by impact of non-resonant things; "vigour" - activity and strength of body or mind; "wisdom" - experience and knowledge with the power of judging rightly.

b) A verb:

"booze" - fuddle oneself with drink; "collaborate" - work in combination with another; "cuff" - strike

with the hand; "culminate" - reach highest point of development; "daunt" - frighten into giving up a purpose; "dazzle" - confuse the sight by overpowering brightness; "drudge" - work hard at distasteful tasks; "encroach" - intrude on others' territory; "estrange" - alienate person from another; "hoax" - deceive by way of joke; "interpellate" - interrupt to demand explanation; "malinger" - pretend illness to escape duty; "pummel" - strike repeatedly with the fists; "scrawl" - write in hurried untidy way; "scuffle" - struggle confusedly with pushing about; "speculate" - indulge in thought of a conjectural theoretical kind; "strut" - walk in stiff pompous way; "tramp" - walk with firm heavy tread.

c) An adjective:

"collateral" - connected but aside from main line; "considerate" - thoughtful for the feelings or rights of others; "cool" - cold to a slight degree; "docile" - easy to teach and willing to obey; "obedient" - submissive to superior's will; "partial" - biased in favour of one side; "plausible" - clever at making out a case; "precocious" - remarkable for early development; "resourceful" - good at devising expedients; "splenetic" - liable to fits of ill-temper; "tipsy" - unsteady in gait with drink.

2. The pivotal word (of the same part of speech and more general meaning) is preceded by a limiting attribute:

"ball" - social assembly for dancing; "bigot" - violent and unreasonable adherent of a creed or view; "clairvoyance" - abnormal faculty of seeing what is out of sight; "collision" - violent encounter of moving bodies; "diligence" - unremitting application to work; "din" - continuous roar of confused noises; "growl" - guttural sound of anger; "lucre" - pecuniary gain as a motive; "massacre" - general slaughter, esp. of unresisting persons; "outrage" - forcible violation of others' rights; "proverb" - short pithy saying in general use; "riposte" - quick return thrust in fencing; "shout" - loud cry from person or company calling attention or expressing joy, defiance, approval; "spleen" - abdominal organ acting on the blood; "stalwart" - resolute member of party in politics; "thrill" - a nervous tremor due to intense emotion; "typhoon" - violent hurricane of the China seas.

3. The pivotal word belongs to a different part of speech:

a) the entry-word is a noun, the pivotal word is a verbal noun or gerund:

"burglary" - breaking into house by night with felonious intent; "complexion" - colouring and skin texture of the face; "matricide" - killing of one's mother; "meander" - departing from straight course; "pride" - feeling of elation and pleasure; "scruple" - feeling of doubt or hesitation about something.

b) The entry-word is an adjective, the pivotal word is a participle:

"busy" - working with concentrated attention; "careworn" - showing effects of anxiety; "continual" - occurring on every occasion; "desultory" - changing from one thing to another; "flippant" - treating serious things lightly; "identical" - agreeing in all details with; "lucrative" - yielding considerable profits; "malevolent" - wishing ill to others; "oblique" - diverging from straight line; "truculent" - showing bellicose merciless temper; "variegated" - showing patches of different colours; "versatile" - turning readily from one occupation to another.

4. A separate group includes the cases in which the entry-word is explained by means of a phrase, introduced by an indefinite or relative pronoun.

a) A relative pronoun:

"corrigible" - that can be corrected; "indelible" - that cannot be blotted out; "insatiable" - that cannot be sated; "insuperable" - that cannot be got over; "intelligible" - that can be understood; "intangible" - that cannot be touched; "necessary" - that must be done; "palpable" - that can be touched ; "probable" - that may be expected to happen or prove true or correct; "rigid" - that cannot be bent; "transparent" - that can be clearly seen through.

b) An indefinite pronoun:

"assassin" - one hired to kill another treacherously; "conceit" - one's notion of oneself; "impostor" - one who assumes a false character; "lure" - something used to entice; "restriction" - something that limits action; "thief" - one who takes away by stealth what belongs to another.

Although both an utterance and a definition are "longer than a word" and analysable into words, they are basically different. An utterance, as has been explained above, carries a purport which is interpretable only in contexts, while a definition, although it is a combination of words, or even a whole sentence, carries no purport. Thus, the difference between utterances or word-combinations used as definitions of individual words, on the one hand, and normal or natural utterances, as they occur in speech, on the other, is obvious. The utterance which is used to describe the meaning of a word is of a logical character, it is always abstract, it is always an attempt to express a certain idea, a certain something which is discoverable - so people think - within a word of a natural human language. A word can be polysemantic, so in a dictionary it can be supplied with several definitions, each of which specially compiled or composed to describe or to define its meaning, although the word "define" here is perhaps not properly used, because dictionary definitions are hardly ever worthy of the name. To be a definition in the full sense it must be something that is logically irreproachable, whereas most of the time

dictionary definitions are no more than explanatory descriptions of something which is again never very clearly [illegible] ed. It goes without saying that in the case of a polysemantic word all these difficulties are multiplied, because to work out or compile an explanatory definition which will keep the different meanings of a word clearly apart and at the same time show how they converge within a single semantic structure is a task which very few of the dictionaries have so far achieved.

It follows from what has just been said, that both an explanation and a definition are longer and more elaborate than a single or separate word. They are therefore the most natural means of getting to the bottom of a word's semantic content, of showing what this or that word really means. But certainly not the only means, for both in dictionaries and in life we very often find words used not in their own right, not to denote "things-meant", but to disclose the meanings of other words. This being a well-known fact the "definitional" fallacy is again exposed. For if a word has no meaning unless it is first given a definition (if it is only the definition that fills it with meaning), then how is it possible that words should be explained by separate words? How is it possible that monolexemic units should be explained by other monolexemic units[20]?

We would now like to sum up the main points made above: on the one hand, then, there is soderžanije-namerenije (the purport) of an utterance and, on the other, the c a t e g o r i a l

and l e x i c a l meanings, the latter being the meaning of a separate word. We have no doubt that however numerous the different trends, attitudes or approaches, however energetic or active the desire to say that words as such have no meanings, that they acquire meanings only in contexts, that they are only created, as it were, by different definitions and so on, the fact that a word is a two-sided unit, that it has both a specific expression and an individual content of its own remains.

Chapter 3

The Word as a Dialectical Unity of Content and Expression

The great difference between the purport of a sentence and the meaning of a word lies mainly in the fact that whereas the proper understanding of the purport of a sentence requires for its expression various prosodic modifications in different contexts of situation, the separate word (otdel'noje slovo) has a constant n o m i n a t i v e meaning (svojo osnovnoje nominativnoje značenije)[21]. If we take a dictionary and begin to read the words one after another, without any preconceived attempt to choose the easiest, but simply to read them one after the other to an audience of people who know the language in question, then we will have no doubt whatsoever that they will be able to tell us the difference between, for example, "the sun" and "the moon", or between "running" and "weeping", or between something that is "meritorious" and something that is "shameful". Without any contexts it is always possible to specify, to explain, to "signal", or symbolize what the general, basic or nominative meaning of a word is. Although words like "thing", or "let", or "yet", that is, words of the widest meanings may be said to have lost their individual reference, simply because some of the meanings of some of the words are so general as to become very vague, even in cases of this kind one can easily distinguish between "letting" and "getting", for example.

After all, the general idea behind even those very weakly, very slightly semantically loaded words is quite clear.

It follows that we are quite positive and absolutely sure that the linguistic meaning, the meaning of a word is the reverberation in the human consciousness of a certain object, or a process, or a phenomenon, or a relationship, or an analogous psychic formation which has been constructed from reverberations of separate elements of reality. But it is a particular kind of reverberation, for it forms part of the s t r u c t u r e of the linguistic unit - the W o r d - as its inner side (vnutrenn'aja storona), its content, with respect to which the particular sound-complex acts, or is realized, or does the work, or figures, or functions as the material "caul", the material "envelope", the container which must of necessity be always present not only in order that the meaning can be communicated to others, but also in order that it may be formed, that it may exist and develop. Unless there is this "sound-caul" or "envelope" which moulds the particular piece or stretch or quantity of meaning in this particular way the word cannot exist. Although this definition has been repeated so many times in different languages and there is the classical example with "hand" and "arm"[22] which has been adduced again and again - although roughly the same understanding of the problem is found in the works of Edward Sapir - for some reasons which to the present authors are very difficult to understand this remains something that some people still fail to see.

To return to Edward Sapir's famous definition of a word as "... a definitely moulded entity that takes in as much or as little of the conceptual material of the whole thought as the genius of the language cares to allow". Metaphorically speaking, one thinks first of the availability of a certain amount of conceptual material, for no meaning could ever be moulded unless there was something to mould it from, the conceptual material which is "reverberated" by the consciousness of the people who speak this or that language. Then there is the expression plane, the phonetical means that every language uses, the sum total of the sound system at its disposal to help dissect the unformed conceptual material according to its own "genius".

So far we have laid stress on points of agreement. When, however, it comes to the mystic "genius" we cannot follow Sapir any longer. The semantic organization and development of the vocabulary of a language is a historical process and fully conditioned by the specific features of the history of the speech community in question. It all depends on what happened to the speech community extralinguistically, what were the historical events the speech community had to go through or experience in the course of its material and social life. That is the reason why, theoretically speaking, there is nothing to prevent a scientific investigation of the gradual process of this or that "moulding" of the "conceptual material of the whole thought": how the expression plane developed, in what particular way, under the influence of what factors the con-

ceptual material the speech community had in its possession was moulded; why this particular division or organization was chosen from all the possible or probable ones. This can be demonstrated by means of very simple examples with "hands" and "arms", as above, but it could also be shown by a host of other words. Thus, for instance, the English verb "to know" or the Russian znat' covers the same amount of "conceptual ground" as, for example, the French savoir and connaître or the German wissen and kennen[23]. In the literature on the subject we can find as many examples as we like of the same conceptual material being differently moulded in different languages.

It follows quite naturally that we cannot apply the term "meaning" to the conceptual material alone[24]. The conceptual material is not "linguistic meaning", it is studied as such by logic - a separate science with not only a separate object but also its own set of scientific categories. Ogden and Richards made it quite clear that concepts are not a linguistic, but a logical category; it is logic and philosophy whose concern concepts and their essential features are. Linguistics, as we have said again and again, has got enough to do with 1) purports; 2) categorial and 3) lexical m e a n i n g s .

Thus, a given stretch or piece of "conceptual material" becomes a fact of language only if a constant and firmly established association between it and a given piece of linguistic expression is established. The fact that linguistic meaning is unthinkable without linguistic expression, its being indissolubly intertwined with the latter, distinguishes

it from concepts. Concepts can be imagined as entirely abstract entities, whereas linguistic meaning is concrete in the sense that it depends on concrete linguistic expression.

According to V.I.Lenin's theory of reverberation, all knowledge of the outside world is based on the principle of otraženija v soznanii ("conceptual reverberation"). But there are different levels of reverberation. Conceptual reverberation underlies the formation of concepts. When we write chemical or mathematical formulae or use notation in music, the expression plane is extralingual. As linguists, we are concerned with only one type of expression - the sound-cauls of l i n g u i s t - i c units. It is therefore very interesting to discuss one more aspect of our problem: what are the different types of relationship between the separate bits or pieces of conceptual material and the sound-cauls in which they appear?

Roughly speaking, there are three basic types of relation between content and expression in natural human languages:

I. There are found in European languages certain lexical subsystems which, by and large, are indifferent to the form they exist in. Thus, for instance, "ten", "seventy-five", "one hundred" belong to the type of words for which in civilized society we find well-established symbols of secondary semiotic systems (numbers, notation in music, etc.).

II. Next comes the type exemplified above by the "hand - arm" vs. "ruka" relationship[25]. With a physically observable tangible "referent" the relation between content and expression is easy to understand.

III. Much more complex are cases like "know" - znat' - savoir/connaître - wissen/kennen; want/wish/desire - xotet'/želat' - vouloir/desirer - wünschen/erlangen; fancy/love/cherish - l'ubit' - aimer - lieben. Here the reverberation becomes so complex, the content appears to be such a complicated "chemical combination of elements", that to unravel it, to understand the difference between a pair like "cherish" and "love", for example, becomes one of the main problems of lexicology[26].

The difference between I, II, and III may then be considered as one of degree of complexity of reverberation and may be summed up as follows:

In case I the linguistic expression is supplemented by symbols of a secondary semiotic system. They are extralinguistically organized, which facilitates their understanding and description.

In case II the reverberated "objects" are physically tangible, can be directly apprehended by the senses, are coordinated in space and time.

In case III the linguistic units - the Words - are "chemical compositions", wayward and whimsical combinations of different reverberations or different elements of content which hardly lend themselves to analysis. Words like "fancy", "cherish", etc. cannot be translated into an auxiliary semiotic system. Their referents cannot be actually seen or touched. Nevertheless these units make up a very large part of the vocabulary and present the greatest difficulty in

lexicology, lexicographic work and language-learning.

Case III is not, however, the limit of complexity, for there are still more complex cases like, for example, "mermaid", "goblin", "centaur", or "square root from minus one" - that is, expressions and words which cannot be correlated with reality in any way, because the things they denote simply do not exist. They are fictions of the human brain which has constructed them, synthesized them from a number of separate reverberations to serve the more imaginative uses of language.

All along the basic dichotomy of our science - the language-speech one - was tacitly excluded from the discussion. It is now time to say a few words on the subject. Utterances with their individual purports are facts of <u>speech</u>. They can be properly <u>interpreted</u> only in concrete speech situations or in sufficiently extended linguistic contexts. In contradistinction to utterances <u>words</u> have <u>meanings</u> as units of <u>language</u>, i.e. emically. In concrete speech situations they are said to be used in this or that <u>sense</u>, to <u>function</u> in a certain way within a given act of communication[27].

In the course of the present section our approach to the separate word and its intensional meaning was ... "rational". We have consistently tried to rationalize, to explain the connection between the content and expression of a Word as something which had never caused any trouble. In actual fact, however, taking words at their "face" value, as it were, one by one, although scientifically correct and legitimate, is nevertheless a process which harbours the possibility of abuse of the words' abstract meanings[28].

Beginning with Aristotle, who was "superstitiously devoted to words", the dependence on the accidents of language, on the accidents of one's mother-tongue was very pronounced[29]. One cannot but agree that turning then to the more emotional thought, we shall not be surprised to find that modern mankind is lost in a "veritable orgy of verbomania". But things began to improve as far back as the 14-th century, when there was "the Nominalist analysis of William of Occam" and then in the 17-th the work of Bacon and Hobbes. The discussion rises to an apex with the Third Book of Locke's "Essay" and the interest of Leibnitz in a Philosophical Language - a "Characteristica Universalis" about which we hear so much to-day.

In our time rational communication, scientific information retrieval, the elaboration of "optimal" systems of communication is a large branch of industry. Its development has been inspired by the postulates of General semantics and stimulated by economic factors. The Department has persistently sought to contribute to this line of research, perhaps not entirely unsuccessfully. In the present Manual, however, we are concerned only with the "unimproved", "unrationalized" natural human language as it really is.

NOTES

1. We could paraphrase Stephen Ullmann's (1951, p.6) statement: "... a fundamental identity of opinion is only too often concealed by divergent and overlapping terminologies". The fact that there is no real difference in judgement, or in ability to explain or understand is only too often concealed by vague, divergent and overlapping definitions.

2. Cf. Ullmann (1962, p. 54): "... Meaning is one of the most ambiguous and controversial terms in the theory of language. In "The Meaning of Meaning", Ogden and Richards collected no less than sixteen different definitions of it - twenty-three if each subdivision is counted separately. Since them, many new uses, implicit or explicit, have been added to this formidable growth of ambiguity, and in the opinion of some scholars the term has become unusable for scientific purposes".

The list of terms alone is impressive. Thus: "... situational or designative, or referential or semantic meaning, behavioral or expressive or pragmatic meaning, sememic or differential meaning, implicative or syntactic or linguistic meaning, extraorganismic or intraorganismic or extralinguistic meaning, cognitive or affective, overt or covert meaning", etc. Cf. Landar (1966, p. 59). A relevant quotation from Ullmann (op. cit., pp. 18-19): "...It would seem that non-linguistic theories about language, meaning, sentence structure and the like are <u>not</u> inevitably and automatically irrelevant to the philologist. They may indeed contribute fruitful suggestions

as long as they have no normative or aprioristic implications and do not prejudice the essentially empirical and "psychological" orientation of language science. ... We should, however, refrain from building too extensively on any particular extra-linguistic theory, which philosophy itself may subsequently discard". Cf. Ogden and Richards (1930, p.248): "... Proceeding on the same principle to "Meaning" itself, we find a widely divergent set of opinions in the writings of the best philosophers. ... In fact, a careful study of the practice of prominent writers of all schools leads to the conclusion that in spite of a tacit assumption that the term is sufficiently understood, no principle governs its usage, nor does any technique exist whereby confusion may be avoided".

In "Osnovnyje tipy leksičeskix značenij slova" Vinogradov (1953, p. 10) speaks disparagingly of lexicographic descriptions of word-meanings: "... There is no clarity in the definition of the lexical meaning of the word; this is very sad, because in all the dictionaries so many meanings of the words are not described, while so many other meanings which do not exist at all, are introduced". Happily this was not the final result of Vinogradov's work. This was said before he gave his own brilliant explanation of what should be understood by the lexical meaning of a word and how the different meanings of a polysemantic word should be analysed.

3. We should like, in this connection, to refer the reader to Garvin (1972, esp. pp. 90-91 and 75) where the more important

aspects of linguistic methodology are presented with unusual clarity.

4. Unfortunately there has been little progress in the study of the prosody of speech during the last ten years. What Pilch (1964, p. 76) had to say on the subject still remains true, generally speaking. We are, nevertheless, pleased to find ever widening recognition of the fact that the basic and most universal form or way of expressing a purport is the supra-segmental or prosodic one (For a discussion in some detail, see esp. Ozarskaja (1972, pp. 16ff.). As far as meaning equivalence on this level is concerned, the point can be illustrated by the following variations of a certain underlying content on the level of Major Syntax: a) Linguistic meaning, which is still often made out to be something elusive, lacks a simple definition; b) Linguistic meaning - elusive and mysterious though it may be - must be given a simple and clear-cut definition; c) Linguistic meaning lacks a clear-cut definition and is therefore made out to be elusive and even mysterious.

5. See Akhmanova (1970, p. 224). For an analysis of categorial meanings, see also Garvin (op. cit., pp. 132ff.).

6. Sapir (1921, p. 33).

7. This is a translation of the definition in "Slovar' lingvističeskix terminov" [A Dictionary of Linguistic Terms] (Akhmanova, 1966, p. 160); cf. also Smirnitsky (1955, p. 89). According to Ullmann (op. cit., p. 6) "... The philological, the linguistic aspect of "meaning", which is the pivotal problem of semantics, suffered from one fundamental ambiguity:

some scholars treat it as a relational term, the connection between sign and signifié, whereas others identify it with the latter". In other words, the basic dichotomy is 1) "meaning" as a relational term, the connection between signifiant and signifié; 2) "meaning" as signifié. Our definition of meaning resolves the ambiguity: the signifié, what is signified by the word, is not, for instance, "this book", i.e. some particular book: it is the reverberation in our consciousness of so many objects of external reality - in our case all the books we have ever seen or heard of. Our thought of "the book" is the signifié, while [buk] (book) is the signifiant. Thus, if we say that "meaning" is a relational term, that it is the connection or relation between signifiant and signifié, this could be accepted if only we expressed clearly what exactly we mean by this "relation". If it is the particular reverberation, or particular part or section of the reverberation of the actual extralinguistic experience for which a particular signifiant, or a particular sound-complex is the form or expression - then, of course, the idea that meaning is a relational term would be acceptable. When discussing the terms signifié, significatum, designatum, signatum, etc., which lend themselves to ambiguous interpretations, Ullmann (op. cit., p. 69) poses the question: "... Do these terms refer to things in the outside world or to mental content corresponding to these?" The above is the answer.

8. Cf. Corder (1972, esp. pp. 43-44). Ogden and Richards (1930, p. 93) deplored "the absence of any systematic theory of interpretation". They are right in assuming that there is no

systematic theory of interpretation from a linguistic point of view (we are not speaking about the pseudolinguistic deductive systems). In psychological terms "interpretation" is, probably, a statement which is a "member of a psychological context of a certain kind". A psychological context is "a recurrent set of mental events peculiarly related to one another so as to recur, as regards their main features, with partial uniformity" (ibid., pp. 56-57).

The concept of "interpretation" appears to be linked with that of "relevant reference". By "reference" we mean "the peculiar character of being directed towards one thing rather than another". The notion of "relevance", according to Ogden and Richards, presupposes ability to distinguish between those parts of communication which are "irrelevant" and those which are "relevant": "... A consideration (notion, idea) or an experience, we shall say, is "relevant" to an interpretation when it forms part of the psychological context which links other contexts together in the peculiar fashion in which interpretation so links them. An "irrelevant" consideration is a non-linking member of a psychological context" (ibid., p. 76).

9. Here and elsewhere we use the system of prosodic transcription worked out at the English Department of Moscow State University. For a detailed description of it, see Nifontova (1971, pp. 11-29; 1972, pp. 20-26).

10. For a selected bibliography on the subject, see Akhmanova and Mikael'an (1969, p. 98). Especially noteworthy is Jakobson (1959, pp. 143ff.).

11. Cf. Quirk (1960, p. 47); Pilch (op. cit., p. 50). This kind of transformation is valid only for specially concocted utterances such as the famous "The gostak distims the doshes" (this interesting fabrication, which first became widely known after the publication of "The Meaning of Meaning", goes back to a rarely cited author A.Ingraham. This is his original text as quoted in "The Meaning of Meaning" (p. 46): "Suppose someone to assert: The gostak distims the doshes. You do not know what this means; nor do I. But if we assume that it is English, we know that the doshes are distimmed by the gostak. We know too that one distimmer of doshes is a gostak. If, moreover, the doshes are galloons, we know that some galloons are distimmed by the gostak. And so we may go on, and so we often do go on").

12. Vallins (1965, pp. 146-147); very well chosen and convincing examples are to be found in Quirk (op. cit., pp. 48-49). But Fillmore, for example, still believes in "meaning equivalences" of the following kind: John likes roses - Roses please John; Bees swarm in the garden - The garden swarms with bees; John sells roses to schoolgirls - Schoolgirls buy roses from John; Harvey rented the house from Sheila - Sheila rented the house to Harvey; Harvey robs John of roses - Harvey steals roses from John; Harvey blamed his failures on Mary - Harvey blamed Mary for his failures. This does not mean to say that Fillmore (in contrast with some other transformationalists?) does not see the difference between the different syntactic realizations of deep structures. Thus, for instance, he is fully

aware of the fact that in the case of "He sprayed the wall with paint" and "He sprayed paint on the wall" there is difference in extent of coverage. Also, for example, conversion of actants will change the logical content (character) of propositions. Thus, for example, "Pianists play pianos" (?) is analytical (in the logical sense), while *"Pianos are played by pianists" (asterisk ours, O.A. and A.M.) is logically "synthetical". It is therefore seen to be one more instance of interpretative semantics, - logical analysis of semantics of propositions and relations between propositions, also against the background of "presuppositions". Hence "entailment rules", as, for example, when the word "even" is introduced: "John is even taller than Bill" (Bill above normal?); "She even reads Sanscrit" - depends on what was to be expected. Cf. also Barbara Partee (1971, pp. 17-21), who distinguishes between semantic differences and "differences in point of view": "... (a) It appears that John is shooting at Bill - (b) John appears to be shooting at Bill - (c) Bill appears to be being shot at by John ... the difference here seems to be a difference in point of view of the speaker - in (a) he is taking in the whole situation, in (b) and (c) focussing on John and Bill respectively".

To denote those linguistic situations when "... two morphemically-distinct utterances "mean the same thing", Pike (1967, pp. 612-613) introduces a new term: "hypermeaning" - the common identified meaning, discoverable only in the cases when "the participants claim that two meanings are the same even though the morpheme sequences involved are different". Hypermean -

ing is "... the meaning of two or more utterances or parts of utterances (1) for which there is culturally-attested conceptualized hypostasis of that meaning by native speakers (that is, the meaning has been talked about in some contexts by the participants in that culture), and (2) for which there is evidence that these participants identify the two verbal expressions as having the same meaning".

13. See Chafe (1971, pp. 12ff.). The article also contains a very interesting and detailed analysis of allegedly equivalent sentences like: The truck and bus collided - The truck and bus collided with each other - The truck collided with the bus; The truck and the bus collided, but only the bus driver was at fault - The truck and the bus collided with each other, but only the bus driver was at fault; The road widened - The road became wider - The road got wider.

14. For a discussion of these, see Ozarskaja (1972, pp. 5-26; 1973).

15. Quirk (1965, pp. 205-217).

16. Ibid., p. 211.

17. See Chafe (1970; 1971).

18. "But a theory of Definition must follow, not precede, a theory of Signs, and it is little realized how large a place is taken both in abstract thought and in practical affairs by sign-situations" (Ogden and Richards, op. cit., p. 19). Although they are quite positive about it there are at present serious doubts which cannot be disregarded.

This is Ogden and Richards' own summary of their views on definition: "In any discussion or interpretation of symbols we need a means of identifying referents. The reply to the question what any word or symbol refers to consists in the substitution of a symbol or symbols which can be better understood. Such substitution is Definition. It involves the selection of known referents as starting-points, and the identification of the definiendum by its connection with these. The defining routes, the relations most commonly used for this purpose, are few in number, though specialists in abstract thought can employ others. ... Familiarity with various defining routes not only conduces to ease of deportment in reasoning and argument, but offers a means of escape from the maze of verbal cross-classifications which the great variety of possible view-points has produced" (pp. 246-247).

"... Under what label do we subsume the fact that the meaning of a word such as "horse" has something in common with the meaning of a phrase defining it: "a large solid-hoofed, herbivorous mammal domesticated by man ..."? - asks Pike (op. cit., p. 612). The answer: "hypermeaning".

19. For a conclusive criticism of this opinion, see N.Ju.Švedova (1970, pp. 36-44). But, of course, in the case of artificial languages or other deductive systems it is through the definition employed that the parts of the symbolic system are linked together: "... Definitions are of great importance in the construction of deductive, scientific systems, those automatic thinking-machines for which logic and mathe-

matics are, as it were, the rules or instructions" (Ogden and Richards, op. cit., p. 121). For the secondary or metasystems "... the rigorous form of definition is chiefly of service in the construction of deductive symbol systems. The freer forms of definition, in which it is sufficient if the referents alone of the two symbols are identical, are indispensable in general discussion" (ibid., p. 92). Definitions can be "intensive" as opposed to "extensive". "... Two symbols may be said to have the same connotation when they symbolize the same reference. An intensive or connotative definition will be one which involved no change in those characters of a referent in virtue of which it forms a context with its original sign. In an extensive definition there may be such change. In other words when we define intensively we keep to the same sign-situation for definiendum and definiens; when we define extensively this may be changed" (ibid., pp. 111-112). "When in a discussion we are asked, "Can you define your terms?" or complain "I do not understand what you mean by the words you use", we endeavour to discover some route by which understanding, i.e., identification of referents, may be secured" (ibid., p. 115). Cf. also Kacnel'son (1965, pp. 18-19).

20. Separate (single) words not only can, but actually are used to explain the meanings of other words in all dictionaries (Cf. Halliday, 1967, p. 34). The fact that the one-word-to-one-word meaning equivalence is so widely established is one more reason why the idea of a word acquiring a meaning only through a definition should be abandoned. It would be hard to

believe that a word has a meaning only on condition that there is in the same language another word whose meaning is so close to the first one as to be usable for its "definition".

What we have just said is not necessarily connected with the metalinguistic side of the question. Thus, in Ogden and Richards (op. cit., pp. 91-92) we find a number of very useful examples of meaning equivalence and definition in both of the above acceptations of the word: "... When we encounter a symbol which we do not comprehend we take steps, if interested, to have another symbol, which we can interpret, provided its referent is the same. Then we can say "I know what symbol A means; it means the same as symbol B". (When scholars say chien means "dog", they should say that chien and "dog" both mean the same.) Similarly if a symbol is long or awkward to use, or likely to be misunderstood, we take a new convenient symbol and use it instead. In both cases the same process, Definition, is occurring. The details of the technique of definition, as required constantly in discussion, call for special study".

21. See Vinogradov (1953, p. 12). Cf. also Stern (1931, p. 85): "... There is no getting away from the fact that single words HAVE more or less permanent meanings, that they actually do refer to certain referents, and not to others, and that this characteristic is the indispensable basis of all communication".

22. Cf. Zgusta (1971, p. 31). We look at the upper limb of the human body, which has been "reverberated" by the human

mind since time immemorial, and find that in English it is divided into two parts: "hand" and "arm". In Russian the whole limb is indiscriminately called "ruka". The difference between "ruka", on the one hand, and "arm" and "hand", on the other, clearly indicates that the meaning of words is the particular kind of linguistic reverberation which consists in slicing up, cutting up reality in this or that way. In our case, the Russian language does not cut it up - "ruka", while the English language cuts it up into two parts - "hand" and "arm".

23. Cf. Smirnitsky and Akhmanova (1954, pp. 41-51).

24. Ogden and Richards (op. cit., p. 99) thought rightly that "... the use of the term "concept" is particularly misleading in linguistic analysis". "The Meaning of Meaning" has lost none of its interest, for its authors had foreseen so many of the mistakes and fallacies of Modern linguistics.

25. See above p. 64 and Note 22.

26. Because of the complexity of the content/expression relationship the "linguistic sign" is often said, following de Saussure, to be "arbitrary" (arbitraire). Some of the critics of the Saussurean principle (Benveniste, Lerch) have tried to show that there is no arbitrariness within the sign; they regard the signifiant/signifié relationship as "necessary", arbitrariness being obtained solely in the relationship between sign and referent. See esp. Jakobson (1965). Cf. also Akhmanova (1971a, pp. 65-68).

27. Cf. Ullmann (op. cit., p. 69): "... Similarly, the mental content called up by the name (which is identical with

Saussure's signifiant) will be termed the sense of the word". Thus, according to Ullmann, name=signifiant, sense=signifié, the latter with the proviso that it refers to mental content, not to the referent itself. Hence the functional definition of meaning: "... Meaning is a reciprocal relation between name and sense, which enables them to call up one another". If one insists on keeping apart the structural and the functional definitions - the emic and the etic ones - the "reciprocal relation between name and sense" is obviously what makes possible communication by means of language.

But in the present part of the book we are mainly concerned with language; speech to us is the material from which we derive our linguistic data, on the basis of which we can make our linguistic generalizations. It is methodologically important for us to stress that in the beginning there was Speech, the original source of all linguistic information.

28. The brilliant pages of Ogden and Richards' "The Meaning of Meaning" have not in this respect, as well as in many others, lost any of their importance or interest. The classical example which has been so often quoted would nevertheless be quite useful for the Mature Students of the FPK (i.e. educated philologists and experienced teachers, who joined the English Department of the Philological Faculty of the Moscow State University for a brief period of advanced study), for they may not have had enough opportunity to appreciate it sufficiently. What we are thinking of is the quotation from Dr.Lyman Abbott, pastor, publicist, and editor,

which, through the efforts of Mr. Upton Sinclair, has now become classic: "... Does Christianity condemn the methods of twentieth-century finance? Doubtless there are some awkward words in the Gospels, but a little "interpretation" is all that is necessary. "Jesus did not say "Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon earth", He said: "Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon earth where moth and rust doth corrupt and where thieves break through and steal". And no sensible American does. Moth and rust do not get at Mr.Rockfeller's oil wells, and thieves do not often break through and steal a railway. What Jesus condemned was hoarding wealth". Each investment, therefore, every worldly acquisition, according to one of the leading divines of the New World, may be judged on its merits" (p. 16). As is obvious from what has been said above, we are not concerned at the moment with the ethics of American capitalism, but with the fact that words as such, words taken one by one and interpreted literally, may be quite often turned and twisted in various ways. That is the reason why we cannot in a book on meaning equivalence stop at separate words, at individual lexical units as such, but must needs take a wider view of the problem and include various points of word-combination, context, polylexemic definitions, and so on.

There are also some very interesting examples to illustrate the difference between "false" and "incorrect" propositions. "An incorrect symbol is one which in a given universe of discourse causes in a suitable interpreter a reference different

from that symbolized in the speaker. Thus if we say, "Charles I died in his bed, making witty remarks", our symbol is more likely to be incorrect than our reference false, for it is no rash suggestion that the referent is Charles II's death in his bed. But in many cases such an audacious exegetic is unwarranted, and it will then be a more difficult matter to decide which is occurring. In the opposite case when, e.g., we say, "The sun is trying to come out", or "The mountain rises", we may clearly be making no different references than if we were to give a scientific description of the situation, but we may mean these assertions to be taken "literally". By taking an assertion literally is meant interpreting our symbols as primary symbols, i.e., as names used with a reference fixed by a given universe of discourse. When for any reason, such as poverty of language, no symbol is at hand we can choose a symbol whose referent is analogous to our referent and transfer this symbol. Then if the speaker fails to see that such symbols are metaphorical or approximative only, i.e., takes them literally, falsity arises, namely the correct symbolization of a false reference by which the interpreter could be misled. If on the other hand the speaker makes a true reference, but uses symbols such that a suitable interpreter, rightly interpreting, makes a false reference, then the symbol is incorrect" (ibid., 102-103).

29. An interesting quotation from Stuart Chase's "The Tyranny of Words" (1938, p. 4): " ... I looked for the first time into the awful depths of language itself - depths into

which the grammarian and the lexicographer have seldom peered, for theirs is a different business. Grammar, syntax, dictionary derivations are to semantics as a history of the coinage is to operations going on in a large modern bank".

PART II

MEANING EQUIVALENCE ON THE LEVEL OF WORDS

Chapter I

The Meaning Equivalence of Words as a Fact of Language

The starting-point, then, for the present part of our book is the fact that words as emic "two-sided" units have invariant, inherent, "intensional" meanings of their own. If this were not the case word-to-word definitions (see below, pp.114ff.) would not be possible and, in general, languages would not be usable as the most important means of human communication.

But how do we know that dog means chien or that relever is "raise again", "restore", "lift up", "enhance", etc.?[1]

It is now often assumed that to be scientific this know - ledge must be arrived at "objectively" (cf. above, pp. 29-30) by studying the valencies of all the elements of a language's word-stock and their exact, mathematically expressed distribution. But to discover the overall distribution of words in general - all the words in all imaginable registers - is, probably, a task for the improved electronic computer of the future. So far studies of this kind have been conducted within thematic groups in the form of what we, following L.V.Ščerba, would prefer to describe as "linguistic experiment"[2]. Thus, for example, when we look at the following contexts: the cows .... through the fields; the lovers ..... through the

fields; the stream ..... through the fields; we understand what the deep structure is, i.e. we can think of the movement of "cows", "lovers", and a "stream" through a stretch of ground. Then we take a number of verbs belonging to the thematic group of "motion" and try them out by placing them on the respective dotted lines. As a result, provided, of course, we know the language - "strayed", "wandered", "plodded", "lumbered", "ran", "trotted" will be said of cows, "wandered", "hurried", "strolled", "walked", "ran" of lovers, while the stream will be said to have "flowed", "rippled", "ran", "meandered", and "rushed".

Although, as we have already said, this kind of exercise may help to learn something about the way different members of a thematic group are used, it is nevertheless quite clear that, for instance, "meander" - as well as some of the other words which are said of cows above - are not words of the same thematic group in the strict sense. True, they may be brought together because in a vague and undefined sense they might be applied to more or less the same piece of extralinguistic reality - the idea of "motion". At the same time some of them are so different, their lexical meanings are so obviously separable and distinct that selecting one or the other for a particular context will depend entirely on w h a t the speaker wants to express.

We are thus reminded of the necessity to divide the two opposing approaches to meaning equivalence: the one based on words as such, words as they actually exist in the language and

the other - utterance-based, aimed at producing a variety of roughly equivalent denotations to a single representative of a notion, however inadequate they may be, if the different shades of meaning and connotations which are concomitant to separate words are taken into account. The second approach may be described as the contextual one.

In this way, the word-context relationship becomes one of the moot points of modern lexicology and lexicography. The invariant meaning of the word and its "combinability" (sočetaje-most') go hand in hand. Quite often the tendency has been to lean too heavily on combinability (the distribution) as the main or the leading factor[3]. On our part, we are convinced that the starting-point for semantic studies is the m e a n i n g of the w o r d , not the context; that words are used in one context and not used in another, because their meaning suits the former and does not suit the latter. There are certain things we can say about, for example, cows and there are certain things we cannot say about cows, provided we know what cows are and what are the meanings of the verbs we can choose from. We understand the difference between a "cow" and a "river": a river can meander through the field, while a cow cannot.

Although the verbs chosen for the three contexts above are not interchangeable - for they denote s p e c i a l kinds of motion, they have enough in common for people to notice the similarity and want to name it. Hence the term "members of a thematic group" (tematičeskoj gruppy): a set or group of words thought of as an autonomous lexical microsystem

and covering a more or less well-defined piece of extra-linguistic reality. The latter, called "semantic field", is singled out on sociolinguistic grounds. Otherwise stated, although, to begin with, we may assume that just looking at a group of semantically similar words as given, for instance, in Roget's "Thesaurus" is sufficient ground for the above definition, it should always be borne in mind that the actual "groups" are abstracted from the facts of the extralinguistic experience of the given speech community. It should be added that "similarity" is not a scientific category. Although "similars do occur" and the fact that things are similar is natural know - ledge, the term is not very well or fully interpreted, let alone defined[4].

However that may be, within a thematic group words are "placed" differently with respect to one another in terms of greater or less similarity. Sometimes they are so "similar", so close together that one cannot use them correctly in speech unless one is fully aware of the delicate shades of meaning and stylistic connotations which distinguish them. It is for words of this kind, for pairs or triads of semantically almost undistinguishable members of thematic groups that the term "synonyms" (syn+onyma) was devised[5]. As has already been stated in the Introduction (pp.16ff above), "synonyms" and "synonymy" are to a considerable extent artificial notions, scientific fictions and not at all something the natural user of language is naturally conscious of[6].

From what has been said above and corroborated by long citations in the Notes it should be clear that all we need are p r a c t i c a l a i d s , "Dictionaries" to teach us to distinguish between or "discriminate" the above-specified members of thematic groups or "synonyms". Somehow or other, however, "synonyms" and "synonymy" have gradually grown out of proportion with linguistic facts and into a branch of semantic theory.

In Soviet linguistics we find very much useful information on the subject which has somehow not been noticed by semasiologists both in this country and abroad. A case in point is the question (and definition) of synonyms and synonymy. By the simple process of turning to the "Slovar' sinonimov russkogo jazyka"[7] and reading the introduction to this invaluable lexicographic achievement one gets a complete picture of the fundamental principles which have been worked out by Russian scholars. Thus, in the Russian tradition "... ever since Russian philologists first became aware of synonyms, they have concentrated on the <u>difference</u> between them...". This is fully reflected in the definition. A careful study of the Russian-Soviet linguistic tradition shows that "synonyms are those members of a thematic group which a) belong to the same part of speech and b) are so close to one another semantically that their correct use in speech can be assured only if the shades of meaning and stylistic connotations which keep them apart (or distinguish them) are carefully and minutely investigated"[8].

These two quotations give us a distinct idea of the all-important difference between the conceptual-logical aspect of the problem of meaning equivalence on the lexical level and the linguistic one. The conceptual-logical approach to synonymy and synonyms is aimed, primarily, at establishing (discovering, searching for) c o m p l e t e meaning equivalence. Logically, in the abstract, "synonyms" are words which are the same, which, as it were, "live" together, are inseparable, semantically identical. That is the l o g i c a l idea of synonymy - and when we do abstract-logical research this, of course, is what we are concerned with.

In real natural human languages the aim of the researcher is basically different. His aim is to take those words, those members of the thematic group which are closest to each other, and look at them through a magnifying glass in order that he may become really proficient in the use of the natural human language in question. For only in this way will it become possible for him to use to the best advantage the particular "idiom", logic having very little or even nothing to do with the process. Linguistics is an empirical science. If there are synonyms in natural human languages, they must be treated in a way which will enable the user to understand all their specific and irrational peculiarities. And if one turns, for instance, to the body of the "Slovar' sinonimov russkogo jazyka", one will find that this is what the authors of the latter were actually concentrating on. The whole point of making a dictionary of synonyms (this has already been mentioned before,

but could as well be reiterated) consists in explaining the difference between synonymous words[9].

"Slovar' sinonimov russkogo jazyka" is an extremely interesting book in the sense that it gives such a clear idea of what Russian linguistic tradition in the field is and how linguistically superior this approach is to the abstract-logical one. In dictionaries based on the latter principle we find long chains of words - seven, ten, twelve, etc. - all heaped together. As is known, the tradition of "heaping words together" goes back to Roget's "Thesaurus of English Words and Phrases", that is, ideographic dictionaries. What we have described as the "logical" approach to synonymy is, though indirectly, connected with the more general problem of ideographic dictionaries. These are important and necessary aids in deductive discussions of meaning and semantic relationships in general; they are invaluable to those scholars who are interested in the elaboration of logical-informational systems, in the creation of intermediate, artificial mediator languages, the research in storage and retrieval of scientific information, general semiotics, etc. But in the present manual there is no question of further research along these lines or discussion of the underlying principles of the logical approach to meaning equivalence.

What we are really after is not only to proclaim and explain, but actually to show that in linguistics (the study of natural human languages) meaning equivalence is unthinkable without linguistic expression, without a minute and detailed

study of the facts of particular languages, the actual words, word-combinations, etc. as found in actual proizvedenijax reči (utterances) and abstracted from them i n d u c t i v e l y[10]. It is unfortunate that for quite a while pejorative connotations have been attached to staraja tradicionnaja and meliorative to novaja matematičeskaja linguistics. These attitudes have nothing to do with science. When a young man, brandishing matrices and algorithms and looking down his nose at the "old fogey" - the proponent of the "traditional", "subjective", "intuitive", "mentalistic" methods, stands up and says that "traditional linguistics" is obsolete and now we are all doing everything on the basis of semiotics, mathematics, symbolic logic, completely abstract deductive-logical thinking and so on (implying at the same time that this is what is good and right whereas traditional linguistics or philology is wrong) - then one cannot help feeling it is high time this sad misunderstanding (which has misled so many of our young linguists) should at long last be explained away.

But it is by no means easy to find a way out of this embarrassing situation. On the one hand, very much harm has already been done: too many young people have embraced the general abstract models in the whole-hearted belief that they are the only kind, the only acceptable, scientific and up-to-date approach to the subject, thus estranging themselves more and more from real linguistic study. On the other, it would be wrong completely to discard the efforts of the hypothetical-deductive axiomaticists. However little has been achieved so

far, however slow and uncertain the progress of the multifarious projects of intermediate (auxiliary, mediator, etc.) languages; however disappointing the results of the stupendous amount of work done in the field of the so-called "machine-translation", it would be most wasteful and harmful to desist from further attempts. Man-machine communication, transmission of information in outer space, automatic indexes, etc. are highly specialized and so far practically unexplored fields where the hypothetic-deductive constructs, calculi and formalized matrices may prove not only useful, but also t h e o n l y methods of approach. But linguistics and linguists will be able to put up with it only on condition of s e p a r a t e d e v e l o p m e n t ![11] Linguistics is an empirical and social, and not a speculative science. Whatever the "altitude" of levels of abstraction the researcher still remains a linguist if he does not lose sight of the original object and preserves a natural preoccupation with the workings of natural human languages.

What has been said about the distinction between the two kinds of approach could easily be illustrated by getting much nearer our field.

All terminologies contain units which, even if we call them synonyms (some people insist on calling them synonyms) would be "synonyms" of a quite different kind. That is why in the case of terminology the meaning equivalence of units should be expressed, mainly, not in terms of synonymy but in terms of doublets, triplets and so on[12]. This is again perfectly in keeping with the Russian tradition. If we turn once more to

the introduction to the "Slovar' sinonimov russkogo jazyka" we shall find the following statement: " ... Within the lexical stock of a language, side by side with "synonyms" as defined above, there is always found a certain number of words, which are distinguishable only because they occur in different spheres of human communication. In the absolute majority of cases they are special terms ... and confined to special lexical spheres, which do not form part of the general literary language (these are called "doublets", "triplets", etc.)"[13]. The important thing then is to understand that in terminological systems synonyms occupy an altogether different place from the one they have in the general literary language. Terminological systems cannot be rationally applied unless the naturally arising multitude of semantically equivalent units is reduced to descriptors, to a limited number of units or terms which by agreement, conventionally are chosen to stand for all the rest of words used to denote the same object or phenomenon[14]. Synonyms would be introduced only if the writer or speaker wanted to bring out some particular aspects or facets of the object he is writing or talking about.

It follows that in this respect terminology, being a rational system of communication - is drastically and basically different from the vocabularies of natural human languages as particular and specific semiotic systems in which the social life of the speech community in question, its history, its literary, poetic, aesthetic, and philosophical traditions are reflected.

Now if we look at the literature on meaning equivalence we shall find that the difference, this important distinction, has not been taken proper care of. As an illustration, we may turn to V.G.Viluman's doctoral thesis "Semantičeskije i funkcional'nyje sv'azi slov i ix sinonimija v sovremennom anglijskom jazyke"[15]. This very interesting dissertation (where the author has shown himself to be a very serious student of science having done an enormous amount of mathematical-statistical research) is based entirely on the abstract-logical semasiological approach - as is often the case nowadays - with formulae, letters, figures, matrices and so on (which to some people of the older generation give an inferiority complex). Thus, for instance, according to the author the formula $D = I - \frac{2g}{W^1 - W^2}$ helps him to judge what the semantic relationships between any member of the lexical set under consideration and its dominant are. Viluman's methodology, which is very elaborate, consists in rationally(!) reducing large numbers of different words to what the researcher calls sinonimičeskije r'ady (synonymic series). But of course, the term sinonimičeskij r'ad is very loosely applied because if we take words like power, strength, energy, vitality, force, vigour, capacity, ability, faculty, intensity, capability, might[16] and call them "synonyms", there is nothing we can do with them to help linguistics. All we can do is sit down and think of some of the logical-mathematical theories, of abstract semantic features (minimal'nyje semantičeskije jedinicy, the ultimate semantic units). But there is certainly

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no harm in that. When one works on the logical basis one is fully entitled to the resources of algebra, theory of sets, symbolic logic, etc. There is nothing to prevent the researcher from emancipating himself from the illogical and involved natural systems. But it should be made quite clear from the very outset that this is not linguistics. It cannot replace linguistics proper, however vociferously it may claim to be more "modern", "logical", "mathematical" and what not. Natural human languages are not logical and linguistics (whose subject is natural human language) is an empirical science. We have no doubt whatsoever that our task consists in a detailed and scrupulous investigation of linguistic f a c t s , of materials which are not only authentic but also a sufficiently reliable reverberation of objective reality in the language in question. No other approaches to linguistic research proper could possibly be imagined.

Chapter 2

The Functional Approach to Meaning Equivalence

However sceptical one may be about the theory of synonyms, the division of "synonyms" into ideographic and stylistic ones[17] was a step forward, for it was based on the well-known linguistic fact of meaning equivalence across registers. Unfortunately even here, i.e., in the simplest and most obvious case, theoretical generalization considerably outstepped analysis of concrete linguostylistic facts[18].

But it was "ideographic synonyms" which gave most trouble to the theoretically-minded student of meaning equivalence. Synonyms are semantically correlated words. This category of correlated words is assumed to have approximately the same or similar meanings (emically, in the language) and, therefore, in optimal cases, the words may be "interchanged", that is, used one instead of the other in speech (be etically interchangeable!)[19]. It follows that the whole question of synonyms arises only because within thematic groups (of which we think as component parts of the vocabulary of a language) there are words which are so close to one another that one begins to wonder what the difference between them is. To be able to use them correctly in speech one requires exact knowledge of the subtle distinctions between these words not only in their meanings, but their stylistic connotations, their idiomatic peculiarities, etc. as well. Only when fully equipped with this knowledge does one find oneself in a position to decide whether this or

that pair of synonyms are or are not "interchangeable" in a given context[20].

From what has been expounded in the Introduction it follows that the main task (or is it problem?) consists in discovering what the living linguistic status of meaning equivalence in general and synonymy in particular is.

Some forty years ago L.A.Bulaxovskij published a very interesting article entitled "Iz žizni omonimov"[21]. Obviously, what we must do now is find a way of penetrating into what in Russian could be described as žizn' sinonimov, the life of synonyms, synonyms as part of the l i v i n g language, synonyms in action. This is the general orientation of our research on synonyms which seeks to be l i n g u i s t i c in the aforementioned sense. The preliminary results of the investigations are published in several manuals[22].

We begin by taking several verbs which could be grouped round the general concept of "apprehending by sight"[23] and approach them from a concrete (empirical, pragmatic) linguistic point of view. We begin by asking ourselves the obvious question: how do they "live"?, how do they actually function in language?, what is the use of synonyms in linguistic communication?

Thus we arrive at certain conclusions and elaborate the theoretical premises which were claimed above. But we have not yet reached the stage where the b a r e f a c t s, the reality of linguistic communication stands out clearly enough

as the background of our research. Where do synonyms actually come in? How do they really function?

In the course of our research it has become clear that a new concept had to be introduced - the concept or method of "digests" - a new term (which could, of course, be improved on in future) but which could do as a makeshift. The term is, of course, arbitrarily chosen and has very little to do with the digests which were prepared by the order of Emperor Justinian, or the literary digests of our own day. The reason, the underlying idea why a new term had to be coined is the following: not only for centuries, but for millennia mankind has been faced with situations when some information that was vital to Society was presented or couched in terms not acceptable to the multitude, to the man in the street. Thus, for instance, if we take a book like "Lamb's Stories from Shakespeare" - what did Charles and Mary Lamb do? They wanted to make the subject-matter of Shakespeare's plays more accessible to the English child. It was very important for the education of children, but at the same time they were, probably, not unjustly concerned about the difficulty of the language in which Shakespeare's original was couched: not only were the words too difficult but the texts were too long, the poetic style not so easy for the child to familiarize himself with - hence the "digest". Or, for instance, the American and the British Bible Societies have now been very active preparing "digests" of King James's Bible - a great work of English literature (without

which the English literature would not be what it is). Although it is more than questionable whether King James's Bible could or should be "digested" in this way[24], to the linguist the final result is of the greatest interest. Besides, we have at our disposal a large number of translations into "Basic English" of different works of English literature which furnish us with a large amount of authentic material for a completely objective study of the actual correlations which the natural and higaly intellectual native speaker of English establishes between words through the way they are used. As everybody knows, "Basic English", the authors of which were very erudite philologists, was devised as a universal artificial semiotic system by means of which to "digest" texts into reduced and simplified versions[25]. As far as "apprehending by sight" is concerned the verb "see" is the only one (not "behold", or "discern", or "observe", or "perceive", etc.) used in all the translations[26] in accordance with the Basic List.

When we approach "digested" texts of this kind from a purely linguistic point of view, we find that the method of comparing them with their originals is linguistically extremely valuable. These texts serve first and foremost as very reliable material for the observation of concrete linguistic phenomena, as a very interesting example of intralinguistic translation in which synonyms play the most important, if not the leading role. One cannot do "digests" unless one knows what one means by simplifying, unless one has a clear idea of meaning equivalence and is able systematically to substitute one and the same simple word

for a variety of other words bearing on the same idea. The reason why so much store is set here by the experiments with Basic English is the fact that it is a very good illustration of the linguistic approach to the subject. As far as linguistics is concerned, the "method of digests" is incomparably superior to the more formal approaches.

Although the method of comparing original compositions with their "digests" appears to be really very helpful and takes us a long way towards discovering what the importance of synonymy to linguistics really is, it is by no means the only method or way of research in the field in question. Another example of what, perhaps, might be described as the "pragmatic" approach to meaning equivalence in terms of synonyms is what could best be described as "synonymic condensation"[27]. In the literature we found very many cases when writers bring together several words from one and the same thematic group, or words which bear on the same idea (mostly "general" idea) to enhance their purport, to make more detailed and more refined a certain underlying sense, to add conviction and force to their statements or, simply, to make far greater prosodic prominence of a "thing-meant"[28].

To understand the nature of "synonymic condensation" as a semasiological phenomenon, as a semantic fact which cannot be divorced from the rhythmical or prosodic aspects of human speech (different authors often have recourse to "synonymic condensation" also because they want to improve or make more acceptable the particular prosodic shape their utterance is

acquiring, to make speech more intense, as it were, more effective and emotional), we shall present a number of instances, arranging them in accordance with the n u m b e r of words used in the construction[29]. The number of words in the "constructions with semantically allied homogeneous parts" in the material collected varies from two to twelve with the following interesting regularity: the smaller the number, the closer the members to one another semantically; the greater the number, the looser the "associative links". Thus, for example:

a. Constructions with t w o homogeneous parts: dread and fear were upon him; he tasted the bitterness of complete fright and dread; the man looked scared and frightened; a calm and quiet young lady; a pale and ghastly face; she had coaxed and wheedled him; he is false and deceitful; the stories were spurious and false; he used to cheat and hoodwink; Amelia thrilled and trembled all over with anger; it made her tremble and shiver; the cries and shrieks were dreadful; the dancer yelled and screamed; a faint and feeble voice; he was in a feeble and weak condition; rough and harsh words; they were getting coarse and rough; there were many errors and mistakes on every side; I have implored and begged that man; I begged and pleaded with my brother; she felt forsaken and deserted; a fortunate and happy person; national generosity and magnanimity; a swift and rapid step; he followed it quick and fast; a sudden and unexpected stoppage; it is impossible to express feelings and sensations directly, an eminent and

illustrious individual; you are famous and celebrated; his bravery and courage; I never saw his equal for pluck and daring; utter and complete confidence; stupid and silly lies; a sinister and ominous event; gay and merry was the time; in a state of the utmost excitement and agitation; a horrible and hideous face; she had yearned and craved for sympathy; he felt as a stranger and alien; to overcome the dangers and perils; there was fierce debate and argument.

b. Constructions with t h r e e homogeneous parts: your coming here is an affront, an impertinence, an audacity; I admire, esteem, and love them both; thinking, long-headed, sagacious men; he was truly contrite, penitent, and humbled; those fierce, cruel, and savage eyes; everything is flux, movement, and change; you are a hard-hearted, unfeeling, and cruel monster; she is a hold, a stay, a comfort in the deepest affliction; they are covert, sly, underhand communications; there they all lounged, loitered, and slunk about; she felt esteem, respect, and veneration; the consciousness of being hunted, snared, and tracked down had begun to dominate him; the figures of pedestrians appear vague, shadowy, and unreal; I am just a plain, common, ordinary citizen; the evidence is incompetent, irrelevant, and immaterial; she looked fragile, delicate, crushable; he called himself coward, poltroon, sissy; make haste, make speed, hurry and begone; his face was wan, pale, and ghastly; the British remained outsiders, aliens, and misfits in India; they mean to be savage, merciless and cruel; a dejected, heart-broken, and wretched creature; my

companion was threatened with more perils, dangers, and discomforts.

c. Constructions with f o u r homogeneous parts: he coaxed, wheedled, cajoled, and complimented Jos Sedley; there are some stories which fill the man of sensibility with horror, repugnance, abhorrence and disgust; she had been almost beside herself with shame, sorrow, remorse and despair; a real, merry, hearty, good-tempered smile; everywhere was stagnant, slimy, rotten, filthy water; that fellow is the most stiff-necked, arrogant, imbecile, pig-headed numskull; the cheap, mean, nasty, selfish upstarts; a vast, lumbering, ignorant, dull-witted lout; I was thrilled, heart-broken, hilarious, insane; you are a nasty, idle, vicious, good-for-nothing brute.

d. Constructions with f i v e homogeneous parts: he was a low, vulgar, ignorant, sentimental, half-witted humbug; unchanging sameness of serenity, repose, tranquillity, lethargy, vacancy; the corruption, venality, nepotism, violence, and greed of money of these early generations; he travelled incessantly all over India, meeting innumerable people, arguing, debating, reasoning, convincing, and filling them with a part of his own passion; a scolding, unjust, abusive, aggravating, bad old creature; a healthy, happy, progressive, freedom-loving, beautiful nation; Charles was unusually mature, thoughtful, grave, clever and intellectual; active, energetic, intelligent, prosperous, practical nineteenth-century populations; he was a source of amusement, derision, amazement, contempt, and ridicule among the Family; envy, greed, avarice,

meanness and cruelty were not sins; it was met with self-interest, secretiveness, selfishness, greed, and anxiety.

e. Constructions with s i x homogeneous parts: she was shrewd, scheming, deadly, designing, avaricious, grasping; Mrs. Garstin was a hard, cruel, managing, ambitious, parsimonious, and stupid woman; he is a kind, excellent, independent, fine-hearted, hospitable, liberal man; I have been received with politeness, delicacy, sweet temper, hospitality, consideration, and unsurpassable respect; you can wade through a few sentences of malice, meanness, falsehood, perjury, treachery, and cant; a silly, foolish, irrational, quixotic, idiotic, stubborn child; his voice boomed, soared, trembled, quivered, accused, implored; Etienne was a vague fool, egotistic, unintelligent, pretentious, affected, tiresome, and boring; he asked his famous writers only to be interesting, stimulating, colourful, courageous, cynical, and passionate.

f. Constructions with s e v e n homogeneous parts: he was mean, irritable, lazy, dishonest, brutal, slovenly, and unpunctual; grave, honest, intelligent, gentle, manly, charitable, well-meaning Captain Basil; they had the glittering treasures of literacy, ambition, curiosity, gall, irreverence, health, humour; an enlightened, a high-minded, a right-feeling, a conscientious, a dispassionate, a sympathizing, a contemplative jury.

g. Constructions with e i g h t homogeneous parts: she was the soft, damp, fat, sighing, indigestive, clinging, melancholy, depressingly hopeful kind; he was a living example

of the highest probity, good sense, piety, discipline, truthfulness, faithfulness, courage, and firmness.

h. Construction with n i n e homogeneous parts: disloyal, treacherous, brilliant, malicious, even venomous at times, unsentimental and hard-hearted and greedy, and, like all the Bouchards, intrinsically selfish, she had infinite variety and was never dull.

i. Construction with t e n homogeneous parts: the steam-packet goes on stuttering, heaving, wrestling, leaping, diving, jumping, pitching, throbbing, rolling, and rocking.

j. Construction with e l e v e n homogeneous parts: he was unconsciously hypocritical, malicious, mean, intolerant, capricious, vicious, treacherous, cruel, rapacious, small-minded, and not particularly intelligent.

k. Construction with t w e l v e homogeneous parts: he was a middle-aged, long, slim, bony, smooth-shaven, horse-faced, ignorant, stingy, malicious, snarling, fault-hunting, mote-magnifying tyrant.

Although the further we go in the number of homogeneous parts, the more obvious becomes the looseness of the semantic relationship between them, nevertheless this is again a case of l i f e of synonyms, another good illustration of the point we were trying to make above.

Synonyms "live" in these fragments of texts: a concatenation of "synonyms" (although the more we widen the scope of our research, the more obvious it becomes that "true" synonymy

is the exception rather than the rule) or, rather, words "bearing on the same idea" helps to pass on a certain purport, a certain thought much more effectively or imaginatively, to emphasize or bring out, to make more exact a certain underlying concept - to say nothing of the wide possibilities this way of talking offers from the point of view of the expression of emotion by stringing on more and more powerful and metasemiotically impressive words as the speaker goes on.

As has been shown by the materials adduced above, the "life" of synonyms is thus seen to be manifold and variegated. But that is by no means the whole story.

The very interesting observation to be made in this connection is that in the manifold activities of modern philologists the reverse process can take place - a certain content or story may be told by using many more words than would be natural for the writer in his or her usual style. The following is a case in point. A famous writer dies without completing a major work. Somebody else takes it up and decides to complete it. There are, for instance, many theories about some of Shakespeare's tragedies not having been written by him from beginning to end. Or modern detective story writers: it is a well-known fact that some of them often get other people to finish their stories for them; or even sometimes other detective story writers simply imitate their style and carry on. This particular aspect of the great problem we are discussing is especially interesting in connection with authors like, for instance, Jane Austen who had not finished some of her novels[30]. That was what Marie Dobbs had

to say on the subject when she had finished her work on "Sanditon": "... some of her words which differ from our own usage (e.g., "till" instead of "until"; and "perceive", "discern" or "descry" instead of "see") I c o n - s c i o u s l y a d o p t e d (emphasis ours, O.A. and A.M.)". When one reads the text (the completed "Sanditon") one can see for oneself that Marie Dobbs did succeed in counteracting her natural tendency to say "see"; instead of "seeing", she "descries", she "discerns", she "perceives", she "remarks", etc. In other words, the exact opposite, the reverse process as compared with the "digests", as explained above, is found here.

This, again, is an interesting illustration of what actually happens when synonyms are studied as real facts of a real language, when the problem of meaning equivalence is investigated not as an abstract-logical preoccupation, but as part and parcel of natural human activity (or is it "performance"?) in natural human languages.

Chapter 3

Meaning Equivalence and Lexicography

Synonyms "live" not in texts only. A very large and important part of their "lives" manifests itself in dictionaries. The problem of meaning equivalence is always there because unless you have solved it one way or another you cannot write dictionaries at all. Dictionaries are all based on the establishment of a certain meaning equivalence between the unit you are explaining and the units you are using to explain it [31].

The material under consideration is taken from three unilingual dictionaries[32]. One cannot help observing that (most modern work on meaning equivalence being concerned mainly with the abstract problems discussed above) lexicographers were actually left to their own resources - and not all of them being good and serious linguisticians, language theorists or language scientists, they certainly have not for the most part been able to cope with their problems in a scientific way.

What has just been said will be exemplified with the help of the three above-named smaller dictionaries, the smaller ones having been chosen because 1) it is so much easier to manipulate them and 2) the smaller dictionaries insofar as meaning equivalence is concerned can reasonably be expected to be more rational and scientific than the bigger ones because of consideration of space: when one compiles a dictionary the size of the Oxford NED, then why stint oneself? But when one is writing a small dictionary, one has to choose

one's material very carefully, because one cannot put very much into it. As to Michael West's "An International Reader's Dictionary", it was chosen because it combines the lexicographic and "digest" approaches, attempting to explain the meaning of over 24,000 English words within a vocabulary of 1,490 words.

How surprising the material is! We shall illustrate this by analysing the same thematic group, i.e. verbs of visual perception. Let us take the word "behold". According to West, "behold" is "see, watch"; according to Hornby, "behold" is "take notice: see (esp. smth. unusual or striking)"; and according to "The Little Oxford Dictionary" (which we think is a very good dictionary, very handy), "behold" is "see with the eyes". Interesting! West is a very outstanding scientist, Hornby's dictionary is very good as far as dictionaries go and "The Little Oxford Dictionary", we think, is a marvel. We all use these dictionaries, but we never compare the different definitions, we do not bother with problems of meaning equivalence or non-equivalence and of course we are tolerably happy.

Some more examples. According to West, "descry" is "be able to see smth. a long way off"; according to Hornby, it is "catch sight of; see (esp. smth. a long way off)". While in "The Little Oxford Dictionary", "descry" means "make out dimly; succeed in d i s c e r n i n g ". It is interesting that even the arrangement of the definitions is different.

The word "discern", according to West, is "see or feel with some difficulty, e.g., a distant object, a fine difference, a faint smell"; according to Hornby, it is "see clearly (with the eyes or with the mind); (esp. see with an effort)". In

"The Little Oxford Dictionary" "discern" is "make out or d e s c r y ". In terms of word-to-word definition, then, according to "The Little Oxford Dictionary", "descry" is "d i s c e r n" and "discern" is " d e s c r y ". West naturally could not use "discern" to explain "descry" because it is not in the 1,490 words.

All this does not mean to say that we never come across the same definitions in different dictionaries. We do. Thus, for instance, both Hornby and "The Little Oxford Dictionary" explain "espy" as "catch sight of". Nevertheless, West thinks that "espy" means "see, usually from a distance - or smth. hidden".

The "dictionary" aspect of meaning equivalence is complicated (as compared with what was discussed up to now) by the fact that it is no longer word against word all the time, but quite frequently word against phrase or even period[33]. Before one has made even preliminary steps in this direction one finds that one is confronted with the enormous problem of d e f i n i t i o n in general and the difference between logical definitions and p h i l o l o g i c a l ones.

The problem of dictionary definitions is a very old problem, because dictionaries have been compiled since time immemorial. It has always been assumed tacitly that the meaning of one linguistic unit can be rendered or explained by means of another one or several units of the same language. This process has also been described as "intralinguistic translation".

Most of the time this approach to meaning equivalence, the attempt to use meaning equivalence for the p r a c t i c a l p u r p o s e s in question was completely

unscientific in the sense that there were no rules or principles of doing it: even in very good dictionaries the definitions (or is it explanations?) are far from well-planned. Thus (if we turn to the material gleaned from the dictionaries) we shall find that even with monolexemic examples the rule of explanation by means of a simpler, or more ordinary, or more frequent, or neutral, or generally known word (which, of course, should be the rational thing to do) is not always observed.

We shall begin by illustrating the proper way of doing it: the simpler word, the word which can be reasonably assumed to be more generally known, to be monolexemically employed to explain or stand for a word which is rarer, not so often used. Thus, for instance:

Nouns: abdomen - belly; adherent - supporter; aliment - food; ambuscade - ambush; annunciation - announcement; anomaly - irregularity; arbiter - judge; aught - anything; behest - command; benison - benediction; bevy - company; bourn - stream; calligraphy - handwriting; chastisement - punishment; clough - ravine; coadjutor - assistant; commendation - praise; commixture - blending; concomitance - coexistence; contention - strife; contusion - bruise; conundrum - riddle; dale - valley; delectation - enjoyment; dissidence - disagreement; dole - woe; effrontery - impudence; erudition - learning; exodus - departure; extrusion - expulsion; hegemony - leadership; hilarity - merriment; homogeneity - uniformity; incentive - motive; inception - beginning; inebriate - drunkard; ingress - entrance; interim - meantime; interment - burial; ire - anger; irruption - invasion; jeopardy - danger; jobation - reprimand; larceny - theft;

malefactor - criminal; malnutrition - underfeeding; mendicant - beggar; moiety - half; mulct - fine; munificence - liberality; obsecration - entreaty; obsequies - funeral; occident - the west; orthography - spelling; pabulum - food; pixy - fairy; poltroon - coward; poniard - dagger; promontory - headland; pugilism - boxing; pustule - pimple; sepulchre - tomb; sobriquet - nickname; spook - ghost; steed - horse; thurible - censer; tintinnabulation - tinkling; tiro - beginner; unanimity - agreement; vendor - seller; vocable - word.

But side by side with these we find many cases when the explaining word and the explained word are, roughly, on the same level of s i m p l i c i t y or d i f f i c u l t y . Thus, for instance:

Verbs: allot - assign; announciate - proclaim; banquet - regale; bemoan - lament; command - order; conserve - preserve; decode - decipher; decrease - diminish; embolden - encourage; endorse - confirm; enounce - enunciate; entice - allure; exasperate - irritate; entwine - interweave; exhume - disinter; exile - banish; flurry - agitate; fondle - caress; imperil - endanger; infringe - transgress; infuriate - enrage; jam - squeeze; leap - jump; merit - deserve; misguide - mislead; outbalance - outweigh; shove - push; shriek - scream; splutter - sputter; stifle - smother; sunder - sever; tally - correspond; thrust - push.

At the same time we find a s i m p l e r word explained by a more d i f f i c u l t , or r a r e , or u n u s u a l one, as in the following cases:

Nouns: blame - censure; garrulity - loquacity; gathering - assembly; generosity - munificence; grippe - influenza;

headland - promontory; hindrance - obstruction; monologue - soliloquy; present - gift; runaway - fugitive.

Adjectives: ceaseless - incessant; centenary - centennial; dogged - tenacious; drunk - intoxicated; enough - sufficient; fretful - querulous; grasping - avaricious; heady - impetuous; needful - requisite; needy - necessitous; penniless - destitute; praiseworthy - meritorious; tearing - vehement; thrifty - economical; unbounded - infinite; undying - immortal; unpleasant - disagreeable; unprejudiced - impartial.

Verbs: accustom - habituate; cow - intimidate; joy - rejoice; jut - project; oversee - superintend.

Some of these relationships are, of course, not so clear. The point, however, remains. When we see a word like "runaway" explained by means of "fugitive", or "generosity" - as "munificence", the question immediately arises: has anybody ever sat down and really compared different synonyms from the point of view of their being more current or less current, more frequently used or less frequently used, more easy or more difficult to understand.

Although the number of papers and dissertations on the subject of synonyms is very great, when we turn to the f a c t s of language, when we take a very simple little pocket dictionary and try to see how it all works in actual life, how meaning equivalence is used for practical purposes, we find that nothing is really done about it, that the whole thing is very haphazard. And of course the worst thing about it is that there are no two words in any language which are absolutely identical[34]. As we have reiterated again and again above, the main point when we are talking about synonyms is to

understand that synonyms are those members of thematic groups, the d i f f e r e n c e between which must be clearly comprehended by users and learners of the language - both native and foreign (the ethnic background of the speakers, here as elsewhere, being, of course, immaterial). Unless we clearly understand the subtlest shades of meaning which distinguish synonyms from one another, we will never learn to speak and write the language properly. It is good dictionaries of synonyms that are essential to bring out the difference, the subtlest distinctions between words which are more or less alike, or, possibly, even almost identical.

But what does one do about it in dictionaries which are not dictionaries of synonyms but just dictionaries in the sense that they are books in which certain words are alphabetically brought together and explained? What happens?

Clearly nobody would ever think of claiming that, for instance, "unanimity" and "agreement" are interchangeable, or that there is no difference between them. If we say, for instance, "There is a considerable amount of agreement between them", there would be no question of substituting for this "There is a considerable amount of unanimity between them", because "unanimity" is not measurable. The degree of "agreement" can be measured. We can say "I agree with you but ...", or "Generally speaking, I agree with you but ...". But we cannot say "We are unanimous on the subject but ...". We say, for instance, "What do you do with beginners?" (we have classes for beginners and it is quite a problem how to work with them). But if somebody were to say "Professor Smith, what do you do with tiros?", he would certainly be surprised

and would not be able to grasp the adherent metasemiotic connotation involved. He would say: "What do you mean? How do you mean?"

Some more examples. We hear a tinkling in the corridor: somebody is carrying the glasses on a tray and we say "There is a tinkling in the corridor". Now supposing that instead of "tinkling", one of the "tiros" said "tintinnabulation" - a rare poetical word which one associates with Edgar Allan Poe's famous poem "The Bells".

Now what is a "steed" according to a unilingual dictionary? A "steed" is a "horse". For instance, you would say "Look at that steed!" Or supposing you would ask: "Are you afraid of ghosts?" - "Not particularly. They say there are ghosts in the old buildings, you do not, as a rule, have any ghosts in the new buildings". But in what context and for what purpose would one substitute "spook" for "ghost"? "Well, they live in the west of the city". You could not substitute "occident". There was plenty of "merry-making" on the eighth of March, if you remember, but you would not call it "jollity". We keep "reprimanding" our students because they very rarely give complete satisfaction, but we would never describe it as "jobation". That man was very angry. His "anger" was extreme. You would not speak of it as "ire".

The situation is in a sense appalling. So let us try, at long last, to teach our students something about English. Let us tell them that the definitions or explanations, which are found in dictionaries, are very approximate, and let us insist upon them always looking up the word that is used as an explanation in its proper alphabetic place. Let them compare

the explanation of the explaining word with the explanation of the explained word and do as much independent research as they can. There is no "short cut" as far as languages are concerned. However logical one's thinking and however mathematical and rational one's approach it gets one nowhere. One may go completely wrong.

Although word-building is a special subject and only remotely connected with that of meaning equivalence, we cannot help saying a few words about it because the resources of derivation are so freely drawn upon in unilingual dictionaries. The point may be brought out by adducing the following examples: acuity - acuteness; clarity - clearness;
candour - candidness; composure - calmness;
diversity - diverseness; delicacy - delicateness;
discretion - discreetness; falsehood - falseness;
humility - humbleness; ingenuity - ingeniousness;
justice - justness; nudity - nakedness;
opacity - opaqueness; pallor - pallidness;
piety - piousness; poverty - poorness;
quietude - quietness; rot - rottenness;
sanctity - saintliness; sanity - saneness;
serenity - sereneness; sobriety - soberness;
squalor - squalidness.

These pairs are very interesting. Thus, for instance, in cases like "diversity" and "diverseness" we always thought that if we find in the language a word of the former type, the latter type is not used; incidentally, "diverseness" is a word none of us have ever seen or heard. It is a p o - t e n t i a l word, in our case - a word specially invented

for the particular dictionary entry[35]. One is tempted to make up funny sentences to demonstrate the difficulty. "Look at the "pallidness" of this poor girl after her fit of influenza!" We have "pallor" and we have the word "pallid", but we would never think of producing "pallidness".

What is "compulsion"? "Compulsion", according to the dictionary, is "compelling". Although the "ing" formation is so very productive, although "compelling" is so clear in its inner form (it is such a clearly motivated word), nevertheless there is no meaning equivalence between it and "compulsion". The same applies to the following examples (we shall confine ourselves to several most obvious cases): ascent - ascending; courtship - courting; crouch - crouching; denunciation - denouncing; espial - espying; espousal - espousing; intention - intending; invasion - invading; obedience - obeying; pretence - pretending; renunciation - renouncing; reply - replying; revelry - revelling; submission - submitting.

The use of certain very productive patterns of word-formation, which we still find in good unilingual dictionaries, to explain the meaning of not so clearly motivated words is quite interesting and should be done on a much wider scale, in spite of the fact that absolutely productive patterns are mainly patterns for p o t e n t i a l words: they should be thought of in terms of abstract possibilities of formation, not as actually functioning units of language. Here are some more examples.

Nouns. "-er": auditory - hearers; augur - soothsayer; braggart - boaster; custodian - caretaker; fantasy - dreamer; fribble - trifler; guardian - keeper; hypocrite - dissembler; infidel - disbeliever; physician - healer; querist - questioner; saviour - deliverer; suitor - wooer; sycophant - flatterer; vendor - seller.

"-ness": anxiety - uneasiness; asperity - harshness; bliss - gladness; blur - dimness; constancy - faithfulness; contiguity - nearness; debility - feebleness; difference - unlikeness; diffidence - shyness; duplicity - deceitfulness; feculence - turbidness; fidelity - faithfulness; folly - foolishness; decorum - seemliness; honesty - uprightness; humour - facetiousness; hurry - eagerness; inanition - emptiness; indiscretion - rashness; infamy - vileness; love - fondness; lubricity - slipperiness; pardon - forgiveness; parsimony - stinginess; paucity - fewness; probity - uprightness; propinquity - nearness; propriety - fitness; reticence - uncommunicativeness; sloth - laziness; temerity - rashness; unreserve - frankness; utility - profitableness; vertigo - dizziness; vicinity - nearness; waggery - facetiousness.

"-ing": commixture - blending; interference - intermeddling; malnutrition - underfeeding; premonition - forewarning; presentiment - foreboding; rapine - plundering; reminiscence - remembering; spoliation - pillaging; theft - stealing; thievery - stealing.

Adjectives. "-less": daredevil - reckless; dismal - cheerless; futile - useless; immaculate - spotless; incomparable - matchless; inexorable - relentless; innocuous - harmless; innumerable - countless; irreproachable - faultless;

lone - companionless; maladroit - tactless; naive - artless; naught - worthless; null - expressionless; unblushing - shameless; undaunted - fearless.

"-able": absurd - unreasonable; accursed - detestable; appropriate - suitable; dependable - reliable; fickle - changeable; incontrovertible - indisputable; indefinable - unexplainable; ineffable - unspeakable; inextinguishable - unquenchable; inopportune - unseasonable; insufferable - unbearable; laudable - commendable; nubile - marriageable; permissible - allowable; potable - drinkable; remunerative - profitable. (Including those cases when "-able" is attached to apocopated stems): august - venerable; detestable - abominable; execrable - abominable; indocile - intractable; insurmountable - insuperable; vile - despicable.

"-ish": arch - roguish; bashful - sheepish; bestial - brutish; dishonest - knavish; effeminate - womanish; genteel - stylish; inert - sluggish; jocose, jocular - waggish; nigrescent - blackish; phlegmatic - sluggish; prim - prudish; puerile - childish; sickly - mawkish; slack - sluggish; surly - churlish; tricky - ticklish.

"-ing": compliant - yielding; fetid - stinking; fulgent - shining; hesitant - hesitating; incentive - inciting; indefatigable - unwearying; indomitable - unyielding; infidel - unbelieving; malodorous - stinking; mercantile - trading; minatory - threatening; niminy-piminy - mincing; pensile - hanging; plaguy - annoying; shilly-shally - vacillating; stupendous - amazing; tortuous - winding; vagrant - wandering; weary - tiring.

A separate sub-group is formed by cases in which the "explaining" word is a compound, for instance:

Adjectives: agile - quick-moving; blear - dim-sighted; bonny - healthy-looking; bumptious - self-assertive; caddish - ill-bred; cantankerous - cross-grained; chubby - round-faced; comical - mirth-provoking; complacent - self-satisfied; dexterous - neat-handed; dingy - dull-coloured; dowdy - ill-dressed; fat - well-fed; fusty - stale-smelling; gay - light-hearted; generous - noble-minded; grizzly - grey-haired; gruff - rough-voiced; grumpy - ill-tempered; haggard - wild-looking; headstrong - self-willed; illiberal - narrow-minded; inveterate - deep-rooted; irascible - hot-tempered; laborious - hard-working; mediocre - second-rate; motley - parti-coloured; omnipotent - all-powerful; oviform - egg-shaped; pallid - sickly-looking; placable - mild-tempered; plaintive - mournful-sounding; prolix - long-winded; purblind - dim-sighted; pursy - short-winded; pusillanimous - faint-hearted; raucous - harsh-sounding; rubicund - red-faced; salubrious - health-giving; scrumptious - first-rate; smug - self-complacent; swarthy - dark-hued; testy - short-tempered; trite - well-worn; uppish - self-assertive; valid - well-grounded; wizened, wizen, weazen - shrivelled-looking.

Nouns: abode - dwelling-place; buccaneer - sea-rover; carouse - drinking-bout; compatriot - fellow-countryman; complacency - self-satisfaction; coward - faint-hearted; diffidence - self-distrust; frolic - merry-making; malice - ill-will; midden - dung-hill; outing - pleasure-trip; parturition - child-birth; nostalgia - home-sickness; pretence - make-believe; pugilist - prize-fighter, serviette - table-napkin; vendetta - blood-feud.

So much then for meaning equivalence and linguistic expression on the lexical level, where the question of d i f f e r e n c e was all the time in the centre of attention. Meaning equivalence, therefore, should be taken with a grain of salt. The main point was to show that there are so many situations in life where people have to fall back on meaning equivalence and assume that two or three or more linguistic units are semantically equivalent. But most of the time what they are really thinking of is the following: although basically, to a certain extent two or more words are semantically equivalent, the difference is so great that unless it is carefully studied very sad misunderstandings arise, the picture is blurred beyond recognition and there is no hope of doing anything that is interesting or profitable if one's subject is natural human languages, and not abstract-philosophical disquisitions on semiotic systems in general.

NOTES

1. See Halliday (1967, p. 34).

2. Kempson and Quirk (1971, p.548ff.) call it "controlled activation of latent contrast". By "activating" latent contrasts in some contexts and suppressing them in others, the authors use what they call "forced-choice selection tests" to describe the semantic nature of a latent feature.

"Informant reaction" differs for "... the native naive speaker, native scientist (including native linguist), and native poet" (Pike, 1967, p.612).

3. In Soviet linguistic literature Švedova's (1970, p.41) important paper showed conclusively that "... However close and constant the interaction between the two factors, in works on theoretical semantics they must be carefully distinguished, kept clearly apart: the study and delimitation of the meanings of a word cannot be substituted by a study of its combinability".

The reason why the context is still much too often overrated is that the two great philosophers - Wittgenstein (1967) and Russell (1956) - supported by their authority views which are linguistically untenable. According to Wittgenstein the meaning of a word is not merely ascertained by its use: "... the meaning of a word <u>is</u> its use in the language", while Russell went so far as to say: "...A word has a meaning, more or less vague; but the meaning is only to be discovered by observing its use; the use comes first, and the meaning is distilled out of it". This is what we positively object to. There has been much criticism of both Wittgenstein and Russell. For a detailed discussion of the relationship between the word

and the context, see Ziff (1962): "...The use of a word depends on many factors many of which have nothing to do with questions of meaning (p. 158). ... In order to discover the intension of a term it is necessary to examine not its purported extension but its actual or correct extension; e.g. if one attempts to grasp the intension of the term "cups" and mistakenly takes the extension of the term to include such things as cans and pots, then one will fail to grasp the correct intension. ...Misuses of words occur. One cannot find out what a word means by examining its actual usage unless one can recognize misuses and deviant uses (p.70)". Cf. also Cohen (1962, p. 53): "... The trouble with this analogy is partly that in reality words are not artifacts, to be operated in accordance with craft-rules or manufacturers' instructions, and that speech is not exactly a technique, but rather something that can itself be either technical or non-technical".

The misuse of words is something that occurs literally at every step. This can be illustrated by merely turning a few pages of "Usage and Abusage" by Partridge. There are plenty of excellent authentic examples gleaned by Partridge (1957) from very good writers. Here are a few instances: argot is misused when it is made an equivalent of jargon (technical vocabulary or language). "Mathematics has been called the language of science. This is not quite accurate. Each branch of science has also an argot of its own", Stuart Chase; describe, misused for indicate or designate or denote. So discriminating a writer as Gibbon fell into this error: "The smallest blemish has not been described by ... jealous ... eyes"; approximately, misused for almost or comparatively. "With ... everything open it would be cool, or approximately cool, in the tropics",

Humphrey Jordan, The Commander Shall; centre, misused for middle. In May 1938, a certain newspaper, with unconscious humour, related that "Colonel Woodhouse sat in the centre of a long table and on either side of him were officials of the Board".

To illustrate the misuses of Russian words we could adduce thousands of cases: see, e.g., Akhmanova, Bel'čikov, and Veselitskij (1960, pp.35-42); Akhmanova, Bel'ajev, and Veselitskij (1965, pp.88-98); Akhmanova (1971b, pp.25-38); Kostomarov (1971, esp. pp.205-221).

All these materials show clearly that the exaggeration of the role of context, and the attempts to minimize the independent semantic content of a word as such go back to philosophical treatises which have very little to do with linguistic reality. A relevant quotation from Ullmann (1962, p. 48): "... "When I use a word", said Humpty Dumpty, "it means just what I choose it to mean - neither more nor less". Some linguists, in their eagerness to underline the importance of context and to demolish the belief that there is a "proper" meaning inherent in each word, go almost as far as Humpty Dumpty in their dogmatic utterances. Statements like "the word exists only through the context and is nothing in itself", which are frequently heard nowadays, are neither accurate nor realistic. While it is perfectly true, and even a truism, that words are almost always found embedded in specific contexts, there are cases when a term stands entirely by itself, without any contextual support, and will still make sense ... If words had no meaning outside contexts it would be impossible to compile a dictionary".

4. Cf. Ogden and Richards (1930, p. 97).

5. Cf. the Preface to "Slovar' sinonimov russkogo jazyka" [A Dictionary of Russian Synonyms] (1970, vol. 1, p. 9):

"... Russian philologists have always concentrated their attention on the discrimination of synonyms, on the difference between them, on their semantic dissimilarity".

The ability to distinguish between synonyms, to differentiate them, to keep them apart, as it were, is something that is very well-studied. There is plenty of literature on the subject, see, for instance, Collinson (1939, pp. 54-77), who has counted nine principal ways in which synonyms can be differentiated. For a recent attempt at a classification of synonyms, cf. Filipec (1961), Ducháček (1964, 1967).

6. Cf. Vinokur (1929, p. 85): "... The so-called synonymity of linguistic means, if we are dealing not with a linguistic abstraction, but with a living actual language; i.e. with that kind of language which really exists as a historical fact, is a mere fiction, a phantasm ("... javl'ajets'a prosto-naprosto fikcijej ..."). A synonym is a synonym only so long as it remains in the dictionary. In the actual contexts of living speech we cannot find a single instance of an environment in which pairs of words like kon' and lošad', reb'onok and dit'a, doroga and put' could be used indiscriminately". Cf. also Bloomfield (1933, p. 145): " ... Our fundamental assumption implies that each linguistic form has a constant and specific meaning. If the forms are phonemically different, we suppose that their meanings also are different - for instance, that each one of a set of forms like "quick", "fast", "swift", "rapid", "speedy", differs from all the others in some constant and conventional feature of meaning. We suppose, in short, that there are no actual synonyms". Cf. also Nida (1965, p. 151): "... There are no real synonyms, i.e. forms which have identical meanings. Words such as peace and tranquillity are ordinarily

listed as synonyms, but they are far from being identical in meaning. One may speak of a peace conference, but the expression tranquillity conference is certainly no identical equivalent. Forms such as childish and puerile or truth and reality illustrate this same principle, namely, that there are no semantically equivalent terms". Similar views have been formulated by Zvegincev (1963, pp. 137-138; 1968, pp.138-139).

The assumption that the law of the sign is violated "in opposite directions" by homonymy and synonymy is rejected by Chafe (1970, p. 58): "... Synonymy, if it were parallel, would be of the sort that might be suggested to exist between "violin" and "fiddle" or between "Henry is unmarried" and "Henry is a bachelor", where a single semantic structure, quite accidentally, has a multiple phonetic representation. I wish to hazard the opinion that the semantic structures are not identical in such cases - a fiddle being a violin that is regarded less elegantly, the state of being a bachelor constituting more of a present social status than simply being unmarried. Such semantic differences are often difficult to describe, but that does not make them less real. If they are real, then there is nothing which parallels the phenomenon of homonymy in the opposite direction". Chafe's ideas on the subject have been anticipated by Roman Jakobson (1971, p. 656): "... In any language instances may occur where two words are synonymous, i.e. semantically coinciding or rather NEARLY coinciding with each other, while differing in their phonemic constitution (though cases of total semantic coincidence and unrestricted permutability within the same code are most uncommon, and often close semantic approximation is mistaken by students for a complete identity). It is obvious that as a rule a distinctive feature in any language

serves to differentiate words (or their grammatical constituents) which are semantically distinct; and, above all, language has no other way to convey a semantic difference than through the distinctive features".

For a contrary view on synonymy, see Harris (1970, pp.786-787); Hockett (1958, pp. 130-132); Hill (1958, pp. 411-412); Lyons (1968, pp. 446-449); Pike (1967, p. 613); Yamaguchi (1961, p. 86).

7. Slovar' sinonimov russkogo jazyka [A Dictionary of Russian Synonyms] (1970, vol. I, p. 9).

8. See Akhmanova (1966, p. 407).

9. In the "Slovar' sinonimov russkogo jazyka" we find entries of the following kind: bezdna - propast' - pučina; gremet' - groxotat' - gromyxat'; buduščij - gr'aduščij - predstojaščij. As far as stylistic differentiation is concerned it is usually threefold: literary, colloquial, and slang. Thus, for instance, there can be an entry (unfortunately, there are not very many of them) of the following kind: vmešivat's'a - mešat's'a(colloq.) - vputyvat's'a (colloq.) - putat's'a (colloq.) - vv'azyvat's'a (colloq.)-lezt' (colloq.) - vlezat' (colloq.) - sovat's'a (slang) - vstrevat' (slang). If you say "Začem vy vmešivajetes' ne v svoi dela?" this, of course, will be neutral and literary. But if you say "Začem bylo mešat's'a ne v svojo delo?" this is colloquial. If you use vputyvat's'a or vv'azyvat's'a then it will also be colloquial with distinct connotations of a pejorative or some other kind whereas vstrevat' or sovat's'a would be slangy, substandard and to be avoided by a careful speaker.

10. Cf. Bloomfield (1933, p. 20): "... The only useful generalizations about language are inductive generalizations".

11. The following quotation will illustrate the point (Hall, 1966, p. 492): " ... This is an excellent example why human language is simply not amenable to mathematical treatment. Mathematics can be applied only to situations in which there is a well defined system, with closed structural characteristics; but language, like human behavior in general, is not and never will be "well-defined" in this sense. Any attempt to use mathematics in linguistics, except in a purely ancillary function, is foredoomed to failure, or to producing such a mutilated and distorted picture of its subject matter that the outcome is unusable and hence valueless". Cf. also the following often quoted passage in Martinet (1954, p. 125): " ... Flaunting mathematical formulae before a linguistic audience or in a linguistic publication is either grossly misinterpreting the needs and capacities of one's audience or readers, or else trying to bully them into accepting one's views by claiming for these the support of a science they tend to respect as the most exact of all sciences, but whose data they are not in a position to verify. We need more and more rigour in linguistics, but our own brand".

12. See Akhmanova (1966, p. 13).

13. Slovar' sinonimov russkogo jazyka (1970, vol. I, p. 11).

14. The first step towards actually establishing the principle of the system of descriptors was made in "Slovar' lingvističeskix terminov" [A Dictionary of Linguistic Terms] (Akhmanova, 1966). In this dictionary in contrast with other technical dictionaries the so-called doublets, triplets and so on are not explained all over again in their alphabetical places but referred to the basic, dominant term which was selected as

the invariant, as the [illegible] representative of the group. This "main representative" appears as the head-word of the entry and serves as Descriptor with respect to the rest.

15. See Viluman (1971, p. 29).

16. Ibid., p. 27.

17. See Vinogradov (1955, p. 69). Cf. also Akhmanova (1966, p. 407): s t y l i s t i c synonyms differ in their emotional-expressive-evaluative overtones, while the i d e o g r a p h i c ones have different, though allied, meanings. Although Ogden and Richards (op. cit., p. 126) do not speak specifically of "stylistic synonyms", the following citation presents the category with their usual lucidity: "... Purpose affects vocabulary in two ways. Sometimes without affecting reference it dictates the choice of symbols specially suited to an occasion. Thus, the language of a teacher in describing his spectroscope to a child may differ from that in which he describes it to his colleague or to his fiancée without there being any difference in his reference. Or an elegant writer will ring the changes on a series of synonyms without changing his reference. On the other hand, a physicist uses different language from that employed by his guide in order to discuss the Spectre of the Brocken; their different purposes affect their language in this case through altering their references". See also Lyons (1968, pp. 448-449), who distinguishes between "cognitive" and "emotive" (or "affective") meaning in the discussion of synonymy: "... By contrast with the vocabulary of scientific and technical discourse, the words of "everyday language" are charged with emotional "associations", or "connotations", over and above their primary, purely "intellectual" meaning".

18. See Marčenko (1972b, pp.13-28).

19. Apres'an (1969, p. 79) presents what has just been tentatively explained in the form of a scientific definition: " ... To call two words (or two phraseological units) lexical synonyms it is necessary and sufficient 1) that they should have a completely identical interpretation, that is to say, that they should be translated into one and the same expression of the semantic language and 2) that they should have the same number of syntactic valences, under condition that the valences with one and the same number have one and the same content". Reading that sort of verbiage, one would imagine that the question of the "semantic language" has already been solved and that every linguist has at his disposal a complete inventory-list of elementary units of meanings of this semantic language!

20. We could not close this chapter without saying a few words about what Ullmann (1951, pp. 106-107) has to say about synonyms. He dedicates to them a whole chapter called "Multiple Meaning and Semantic Pathology" - what in "Očerki po obščej i russkoj leksikologii" [Essays in General and Russian Lexicology] (Akhmanova, 1957, pp. 108-109) is described as the violation of the "law of the sign". Ullmann calls it "pathology" to mean that semantic theory in this case is ill, unwell, that things are not what they should be. Here is the citation: "... These two sets of forces tend on the whole to generate the "one name - more senses" variety of multiple meaning, and to mitigate its other type, the "one sense - more names" situation: they eliminate total synonymy by introducing subtle shades of connotation, referential or emotive differentiation, stylistic and aesthetic discrimination into synonymic

series. ... All complications of the simple "one name-one sense" situation are accommodated under this heading. They fall into two categories: 1) One sense with several names (plurivocité): synonymy; 2) One ame with several senses (plurivalence)". Cf. also Mednikova (1964, pp. 22ff.).

As far as the terminological detalization into "complete" and "partial" synonyms is concerned, the following quotation from "The Meaning of Meaning" (1930, p. 126) is the best we can do within the scope of the present manual: "... Complete synonyms, i.e., words alike in all their functions, probably do not occur. But partial synonyms which are used for the same reference are not uncommon".

A theoretical problem of the greatest methodological significance is the nature of "reference". What exactly do we mean when we use the term and what is the mutual relation between the notions of "reference" and "referent"? If we were to assume that meaning equivalence is determined by identity of "referent", in the positivist sense of the term, we would fall into one of those typical errors which have so often been discussed by philosophers, as, for example: when Napoleon was described both as "the conqueror at Austerlitz" and "the vanquished at Waterloo". It goes without saying that "conqueror" and "vanquished" are completely devoid of meaning equivalence, they are antonyms. One more appropriate citation from "The Meaning of Meaning": "... "The King of England" and "the owner of Buckingham Palace" have the same referent, they do not however symbolize the same reference, quite different psychological contexts being involved in the two cases. They cannot serve as substitutes for one another. Those "symbols" which are substitutes and so can be used to "define" one another not

only have the same referent but symbolize the same reference" (p. 92). When working on the Russian-English Dictionary A.I.Smirnitsky assumed that the surest way to contrastive analysis of two lexical systems is through identification of reference.

21. Bulaxovskij (1928).

22. See Marčenko (1971a; 1971b; 1972a; 1972b).

23. It is very interesting that a similar thematic group was studied by Viluman (1971) from the abstract-logical point of view. To make the difference between the two approaches quite clear, let us now compare the thematic series as viewed by Viluman and Marčenko. The two series are: 1) look, see, view, behold, observe, examine, scrutinize, gaze, watch, stare, eye, survey, glance, scan, notice, ogle, inspect, regard, gape, glare, contemplate, note, peer, peep, gloat, goggle - 26 in all (Viluman's thematic group); 2) behold, descry, discern, observe, perceive, remark, see, view, witness - 9 in all (Marčenko's thematic group).

24. The digest "Good News for Modern Man. The New Testament in Today's English Version" (New York, 1966) as now prepared does not possess the aesthetic or literary value of the original text. It may also be argued that the authors of the new version act under a delusion, for they think that it is easier to "understand" something that is blunt and simple, than something that is beautiful though, perhaps, not so readily accessible to the man in the street. As far as literary texts are concerned, one would be inclined to think that the aesthetically valuable has a stronger impact on audiences than expositions couched in rational, simple terms.

25.For a detailed description of the system of Basic English see Ogden (1934, esp. pp. 3-6): "What is Basic English? Basic English is a careful and systematic selection of 850 English words which will cover those needs of everyday life for which a vocabulary of 20,000 words is frequently employed.These words are not the words most commonly used, as determined by word-counts; but all of them are common, and more than 600 of them are constantly used by English or American child of six. There are 200 names of picturable objects, and 400 other names of things; making 600 nouns in all. There are 150 adjectives. The remaining 100 words put these names and adjectives into operation, so that the whole system may work as normal English. What is its purpose? Basic English has two chief purposes: 1) To serve as an international auxiliary language; that is to say, a second language for use throughout the world in general communication, commerce, and science. 2) To provide a rational introduction to normal English; both as a first step, complete in itself, for those whose natural language is not English, and as a grammatical introduction, encouraging clarity of thought and expression, for English-speaking peoples at any stage of proficiency. Why 850 words? We next discover the number of words necessary to cover the field; that is to say, the essential minimum in which everything of general interest can be talked about. Of the 500,000 words in the largest English dictionaries about 20,000 may be described as common words; and of these between 7,000 and 8,000 are in everyday use. Analysis, over a period of more than ten years, showed that between 800 and 900 are necessary to do the work. So the problem has a practical solution".

26. See, e.g., "The Republic of Plato". A New Version Founded on Basic English by I.A.Richards. New York, 1942; Jonathan Swift. Gulliver in Lilliput. In Basic English. Ed. by I.Litvinoff. Moscow, 1935; Daniel Defoe. Robinson Crusoe. In Basic English. Ed. by I.Litvinoff. Moscow, 1935; "Lamb's Stories from Shakespeare". In Basic English. Ed. by I.Litvinoff. Moscow, 1935; Edgar Allan Poe. The Gold-Insect. In Basic English. Ed. by I.Litvinoff. Moscow, 1936; Anna Sewell. Black Beauty. In Basic English. Ed. by I.Litvinoff. Moscow, 1936.

27. The approach is discussed in some detail in Marčenko (1972a; 1972b).

28. Ullmann (1962, pp.152-153) distinguishes between two possibilities of combination of synonyms: "variation" - when synonyms involved occur at intervals, and "collocation" - when synonyms are in close contact with each other. Cf. also Ullmann (1951, pp. 111-113): "... Synonymic structure implies the formation of associative groups between senses on the "langue" level. ... A purely synchronistic indication that speakers are synonym-conscious is provided by the frequent collocation of synonyms"; we call this synonymic condensation.

"Synonymic condensation" was particularly typical of the style of the English literature of the Elizabethan period. Cf. Warner (1964, p. 83): "... They [the Elizabethans] would not have approved of George Orwell's advice: "If it is possible to cut out a word, cut it out". On the contrary, they often seem to be trying to get in as many words as they can. They heap up words and phrases". See also Jespersen (1943, pp. 89-90); Greenough and Kittredge (1961, pp.116-120); Yamaguchi (1961, pp. 86-89). By the 17-th century, however, the "heaping up of words and phrases" was not only no longer encouraged, but was

simply banned. Cf. Ullmann (1962, p. 154): "... These repetitive constructions were later on proscribed by the purists of the seventeenth century".

In Modern English, according to Ullmann (1951, p. 113), "... the breeding-ground of such collocations is public speaking on the one hand, ... legal jargon on the other. In "David Copperfield" Dickens has ridiculed "deponents who seem to enjoy themselves mightily when they come to several good words in succession, for the expression of one idea; as, that they utterly detest, abominate, and abjure. ... We talk about the tyranny of words but we like to tyrannize over them too" - which shows up another potentially pathological aspect of synonymy".

29. Here and throughout this part of the book we have tried to correlate the number of instances adduced with the frequency of occurrence in the material under investigation - Modern English and American fiction (prose, poetry, political journalism of the XIX-XX centuries).

30. The reader is referred to the often-quoted "Linguostylistics: Theory and Method" (1972), which includes examples of the completed "Sanditon" by Marie Dobbs; see Dobbs (1972, pp. 86-96).

31. Cf. Ogden and Richards (op. cit., p. 207): " ... These fixities in references are for the most part supported and maintained by the use of Dictionaries, and for many purposes "dictionary-meaning" and "good use" would be equivalents. But more refined sense of dictionary-meaning may be indicated. The dictionary is a list of substitute symbols. It says in effect: "This can be substituted for that in such and such

circumstances". It can do this because in these circumstances and for suitable interpreters the references caused by the two symbols will be sufficiently alike. The Dictionary thus serves to mark the overlaps between the references of symbols rather than to define their fields".

32. Michael West. An International Reader's Dictionary. London, Longmans, 1965; "The Little Oxford Dictionary of Current English". Compiled by George Ostler. Third Edition. Oxford, 1967; A.S.Hornby, E.V.Gatenby, H.Wakefield. The Advanced Learner's Dictionary of Current English. Second Edition. London, 1963.

33. On the difference between word-to-word as against word-to-utterance definition see pp.55-61 and Note 20, p.80.

34. See above, Notes 6, 10. The following quotation from Vallins (1965, pp.179-180) may not be unwelcome in this connection: "... No two words are identical in meaning and use; or, to put it another way, no two words are real synonyms. This is not an exaggeration. Five or six "synonyms" may correspond almost exactly, but there is always some little shade of meaning or detail of use that separates them; so that in a given context only one of them is the "right" word. It is because we forget this so often that our writing becomes "woolly" and our speech full of halting substitutes or long circumlocutions. ... The context, the occasion, the type of vocabulary appropriate to the theme, the very sound of the words when spoken - all these things, and some others, are factors in the choice. In one context "I gave him ten bob" is plain English; in another "I sent him half a sovereign as a gift"; and in another "I remitted him ten shillings as a donation".

35. See Krasnova (1973). Cf. also the Preface to the Pocket Oxford Dictionary of Current English where "defendable" is said to be non-extant because there is the normal and frequent, though not "productively-patterned" "defensible".

POSTSCRIPT

Should one study more closely the materials discussed above, one could not but notice that they fall into two distinct parts. On the one hand, facts are adduced and analysed which are linguistic in the proper sense of the word, that is connected with the use of natural human languages in natural human communication. Here belong the preference for this or that verb in the different sciences as well as cases of "synonymic condensation", when writers spontaneously bring together words which they think have the same meaning.

This part of the text, however, is much less voluminous than the analysis of words which are not, properly speaking, connected with normal linguistic communication, with natural communication by means of language. Thus, in the case of what we have called "digests" - Lamb's stories from Shakespeare, the New Bible, or explanations in dictionaries (that is, the use of other words to explain what the head-word of the entry is assumed by the lexicographer to mean) - we are obviously dealing with an altogether different science. In the case of Basic English the aims and preoccupations of the authors are obviously outside the scope of natural linguistic communication.

In this connection an extremely difficult metalinguistic problem arises: if synonymy cannot be regarded as a linguistic category, if it is not linguistics proper - then what is it? Does it belong to cybernetics, or semiotics, or logic? It might, perhaps, be best described as "interlinguistics", if by

"interlinguistics" we understand a science which is not concerned with the study of natural human languages as social phenomena, as a form of social and national consciousness, as something that is inseparable from philology, history, culture, etc. - but which is concerned with sign symbols in general, with all imaginable kinds of systems in which certain units of content are in one-to-one correspondence with certain units of expression.

From what has just been said it follows that there is no such thing as "meaning equivalence" in linguistics. Meaning, equivalence in general and the concept of synonymy in particular, then, is not a linguistic category. Meaning equivalence is a l o g i c a l category, a s e m i o t i c category, a category which interlinguists, logicians, and cyberneticians should concern themselves with. As far as human language in the ordinary sense of the word is concerned all we find are certain more or less arbitrary and not so well-defined philological applications of this concept, various acceptations of the term which cannot be scientifically apprehended. We have quoted extensively (see above, pp.128-130) from a number of famous linguists - Bloomfield, Jakobson, Nida, Smirnitsky, Vinokur, who were quite unanimous in stating the obvious fact that there are no "synonyms", no such thing as absolute meaning equivalence in natural human languages.

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